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Monday, October 3, 1994

Speaker: The Honourable Gilbert Parent

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Monday, October 3, 1994

The House met at 11 a.m.

Prayers

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[*English*]

INCOME TAX ACT

Mr. Vic Althouse (Mackenzie) moved:

That, in the opinion of this House, the government should consider the advisability of introducing amendments to the Income Tax Act so that taxpayers whose income may fluctuate from one year to the next would be able to average their income over five years.

(1105)

He said: Madam Speaker, I introduced this motion some time ago and it was drawn within the last year. The reasons for the motion are fairly clear-cut. It is based on the assumption that the Canadian economy is much more diverse than what some of our policy makers perceive it to be over the last number of years.

We still have literally hundreds of thousands of individuals who are basically self-employed, who work to fulfil a dream of producing what they want to produce on the hope and the assumption that the price or the value of that production will go up or on the hope that they will eventually be able to produce enough of the product to make it an economically viable entity.

While the Canadian economy may have become more industrial and more global, there are still many people who work on this basis. They are farmers, fishermen, real estate brokers, builders, prospectors, architects, artists, musicians and a host of others who sometimes work years without any real remuneration. Eventually the big income year comes and they have in the past been encouraged in their activities which are useful to the whole of Canadian society with the concept of income averaging.

There is a great deal of income fluctuation in some of the sectors of our economy simply because of changes in production due to cyclical weather patterns whether it is in fishing, farming, forestry or a whole host of other businesses attached to those.

There is also fluctuation as world prices go up and down. No matter how efficient a producer one is of wood products or agricultural products or fish products, when the world price is down one is going to show a loss.

However those people do not give up and quit simply because they have a loss in one year. They know that it will turn around. They hope that it will turn around. They realize that their activities are of use to society in general. People have to eat. People need wood for their houses and for their shelter and so they continue.

I brought the motion to the House because we once had three methods of averaging income for the diverse group of people who have up and down incomes. We had general averaging which was available to all taxpayers. At one point it was actually worked out by the department itself when incomes exceeded 120 per cent of the previous year. It was almost automatic.

We had for a while income averaging using annuity contracts which was introduced for a few years. We had five-year block averaging for farmers and fisherpeople.

I want to do a bit of past history of these with a brief explanation because in 20 minutes one cannot do justice to the issue. Prior to June 1992 general averaging, as I said, was available to all. We could go back five years and pay not only income but losses in those five years. This was finally replaced in 1982 with something called forward averaging.

However even tax experts admit this is only helpful when incomes decrease significantly so that a person can be put into a lower tax bracket. It is used by retirees, by athletes who are on their way out, by people who are pulling back rather than to encourage production which is what the original averaging plans did.

Tax experts like Beam and Laiken conclude that the forward averaging has not been a suitable replacement and has not done the job it was hoped it would do.

(1110)

The income averaging annuity contracts which I mentioned were available as well were of very limited use. They were used for the collapsing of RRSPs when people reached the age of 70 or 71 years.

It was used for the utilization of capital gains provisions which were changed in 1982. It is probably not used very much

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any more. It was basically a way of permitting people to adjust to the capital gains provisions in 1982 and some later budgets.

The five-year block averaging which had been available to farmers and fishermen lasted a bit longer. Although it was announced in the budget of 1982 it officially ended in 1987, which means that the last year most people could use it was 1991.

There are some exceptions to that such as in cases in which taxpayers had such low incomes they did not bother filing a return. That is not considered to be one of the years. If they did not file a return in 1988, for instance, they could go until 1992. If they happened to miss three or four years they might still be eligible to pick up on those last remnants of five-year block averaging simply because they have to use five years when they file on time. These could have high incomes or losses and they could all be averaged out.

We need to look at what the replacements for five-year block averaging were. The block averaging has been replaced with a form of forward averaging. There have been a couple of inventory rule changes that were supposed to pick up the slack for farmers and fishermen. While they are helpful in the short term they do not meet all of the advantages that were there for the five-year block averaging.

There is a mandatory inventory adjustment for people with off farm incomes. This is almost all farmers now. Last year we are told that the average family farm incomes were in the neighbourhood of \$43,000, of which just over \$30,000 came from off farm sources. Therefore on average on farm income was about \$13,000 and roughly \$30,000 came from off farm sources.

It is interesting to note that a lot of economists and government policy makers seem to think that the answer is to move to larger farms so that incomes can be generated from those larger farms. At least that is the theory. The reality is that when we look at the data the larger the farm, the larger the off farm income. It is virtually impossible to generate a family income from farms regardless of the size under the economic conditions that have existed for the last several years in Canada.

The second inventory adjustment program allows bringing in livestock, which seems to be defined by the courts as anything that is a living, sensate being, from rabbits to fish to ostriches and llamas as well as the usual horses, cows, pigs, sheep, et cetera.

Some difficulties with the program have been discovered, since a cash accounting method has been permitted. This is a good thing for most farm operators, especially individual operators who are not incorporated. That method of computing income is still available. It allows some transferring of income from one year to the next by selling in one year but collecting the

money the following year for livestock sales and grains and oilseeds.

This is a possibility in most regions of the country. These provisions do not recognize the fact of wide income variations that were handled under the old five-year block averaging system. It might mitigate a sudden income surge at the end of a year and allow some of that income to be shoved into the following year. It does not take into account the large cyclical changes in prices which are then reflected in huge cyclical changes to income for farmers and fishermen which usually ride for three to five years.

(1115)

The five-year averaging provision permitted people to hang in there. Perhaps they would lose money for five years, hoping they would recover in a subsequent five years. This allowed for a shifting of income over the five years and paying the tax accordingly.

The new provision does not permit that kind of flexibility and has provided some real horror stories where the lives of farmers or ranchers are interrupted. They leave an estate which can find itself paying unwarranted amounts of taxes because of the legal work that may not have been done in the proper sequence according to the department of revenue. If step *a* is taken before step *b* the department will double tax.

Paying taxes should not depend on a chance happening initiated unwittingly by so-called professionals acting on behalf of taxpayers or their estates. Rules should be as simple and as clear as is possible. The block averaging is relatively simple in its concept, in that it applies to the total income of the taxpayer and not just the part that exceeded a certain threshold amount. It permits a complete levelling of net incomes over the averaging period, including the offsetting of losses within the period against profits.

Prior to its demise in 1982 block averaging had existed since 1946. It had accomplished a fairly progressive and widespread growth in the economy. It should be used again in the 1990s in recognition of the continued need in our country for the recognition that there is a wide and diverse choice of economic activities that Canadians choose to be engaged in, or are sometimes forced into, which recognizes that some necessary and crucial economic activities have periods of poor returns but that society must permit some recognition through the tax system we continue to need that we need these people for the smooth and efficient working of our society in general.

Most of the groups I have mentioned in regard to tax averaging are not eligible for most of the so-called safety nets that our society takes pride in providing. Most of them are self-employed individuals ineligible for unemployment insurance benefits. Most do not qualify for welfare even though their

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incomes are definitely poverty level from parts of their income cycle, sometimes for three to five years.

I argue that the government should consider the advisability of reintroducing income averaging provisions once again to recognize that fluctuating incomes are a reality for a great many productive individuals in our Canadian system. Fair treatment demands that it be given a higher priority if Canada is once again to flourish.

Mr. Wayne Easter (Malpeque): Madam Speaker, I rise to speak on private member's Motion No. M-256. I question the advisability of moving in this direction at this time.

I am extremely concerned about further complicating the tax system and setting up a situation whereby those with money and in the higher income brackets have the ability to manipulate the tax system to their advantage.

When I talked to Revenue Canada about the issue I was informed its previous experiences with income averaging has shown that such averaging may result in unfair tax advantages to those taxpayers who are able to arrange their affairs so as to control the amount and timing of their income and in turn their tax liabilities.

(1120)

By checking the retirement savings system we will find that in extremely good years some individuals may make significant tax deductible registered retirement savings plan contributions based on income. Where an allowable contribution is not made for a year, it may be carried forward for seven years. RRSP contributions may be made in a year or within 60 days after the year ends.

This system can help individuals to lessen any increased tax burden that might arise as a result of an increase in income, while at the same time fulfil its primary goal of encouraging Canadians to save for retirement. It is a very important point that we have within our tax system the ability for people in their years of good income, when they do not have to draw down on their funds for cost of living and so on, to contribute dollars into retirement savings. It helps them and society as a whole.

Averaging provisions generally introduce a great degree of complexity into the tax system. If the government and Revenue Canada have time to look at the various issues, rather than spending a lot of time looking at block averaging over the years I would certainly favour spending time looking at ways to make those with larger incomes pay their fair share.

I am surprised that greater emphasis is not placed in the motion on those who are somehow dodging the tax system in some way. We should be making those individuals pay their fair share. In fact I am worried about the motion opening up the

possibility for wealthy individuals to manipulate the tax system again to their advantage.

Talking about the complexity in the tax system, any income averaging formula entails detailed and often complex calculations in addition to very specific rules designed among other things to prevent its use for an unintended objective. That is what I am speaking about. Will the motion and its possibilities allow greater manipulation of the tax system? I am very worried about that.

A formula would have to take into account and recalculate benefits and means tested tax credits in low income years, such as child tax benefits, goods and services tax credits and various provincial tax credits, and additional taxes and credit reductions, for example, minimum tax, reduction in age tax credits, and old age security clawbacks in high income years included in the averaging period.

As well, where other supporting individuals have claimed tax benefits based on the income of a particular taxpayer, for example, spousal tax credits, their tax liability would also be adjusted based on the averaged income of the taxpayer.

Those kinds of problems really open up the possibility of manipulating the tax system further to an individual taxpayer's advantage and cause a considerable number of administrative problems in terms of the government department's ability to administer these taxes to see that they are paid fairly and administered by the rules of the act.

Averaging provisions would interact adversely with the alternative minimum tax. The purpose of that tax is to ensure all Canadians with significant incomes in a given year pay at least some level of income tax. Providing income averaging could increase the number of higher income Canadians who pay no income tax for a particular year. This is generally perceived to be manifestly unfair.

(1125)

I do not have anything more than that to say on the issue. However I want to underline one point. I do not believe we should now be opening up the tax system to the possibility of further manipulations by individuals who have extreme amounts of income. We should be looking at other ways of improving the tax system by ensuring that the very wealthy in society pay their fair share. I do not believe the motion deals with that problem.

[Translation]

Mr. Pierre Brien (Témiscamingue): Madam Speaker, before I start my speech on Motion No. 256, allow me to congratulate the people of my riding, especially those of Rouyn-Noranda, for making it into the *Guinness Book of Records* with the longest banner in the world. This 425-metre banner was made by several families to draw attention on the International Year of the Family. It was stretched in the streets of Rouyn-Noranda, yesterday. It was quite a sight, I congratulate them.

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Now, let us move to the motion of the hon. member for Mackenzie which I will read before commenting on it:

That, in the opinion of the House, the government should consider the advisability of introducing amendments to the Income Tax Act so that taxpayers whose income may fluctuate from one year to the next would be able to average their income over five years.

The hon. member explained the objectives of this motion. At first glance, it would seem that it would benefit a number of people in very special job categories. For example artists can make a lot of money one year and very little the next. There are also those who are into production of some kind, like farmers or fishermen. Think of all the self-employed persons who, from one year to the next, do not know how much their income will be. This is the most positive aspect, which does not mean there are not others.

We tried, through various schemes—be it unemployment insurance, crop insurance or others—to stabilize income as much as possible, with relative success, depending on the area of activity. These insurance programs are precisely income stabilization schemes which guarantee a certain income stability.

The problem is that the motion is not restrictive in any way, and would apply to people with very high incomes in a given year, even though they do not belong to any of the categories I just mentioned. Does it mean that anyone with a sudden high income would be able to defer it at will? This might be a way of ensuring that individuals go on a sabbatical every four years. It just might be. But then again is that really the objective?

I believe that the real objective is more to help people whose income fluctuates due to the type of economic activity they are involved in. On several occasions, the member referred to the fact that nowadays our economy is very diverse and that it should be taken into account. However, I doubt very much that it is appropriate to do so for everybody since, obviously, the more time you have to plan how to manage your taxes, the easier it becomes to evade them. Balancing revenues and expenses is one of the fundamental principles in accounting but this goes slightly in the opposite direction and the more you separate the two the more complicated it becomes.

Of course, as the Liberal member mentioned later on, we must wonder whether the whole tax credit system and the entire tax structure would have to get adjusted to take the deductions into account? Should we allow the same income averaging? It would become extremely complex. This does not mean that we should not permit a certain level of income averaging in some specific economic sectors or for individuals involved in these sectors, but it should be done as simply as possible and only in a very

limited and strictly controlled way. Obviously, this kind of measure cannot be very simple.

The Income Tax Act allows companies to carry forward profits and losses, at times with some degree of success, but at other times, the government is depriving itself of significant revenues. Companies are allowed to do some tax planning and they certainly take advantage of it. You could say that they reinvest this money in the economy, except that, in some cases, they minimize the taxes they will have to pay.

(1130)

I have some concerns about extending this system to include all Canadians. I think that we should identify our target more clearly and even take a hard second look at the provision in our tax system that allows businesses to carry forward profits and losses over a certain number of years.

Family trusts are another means used to defer taxes. We have been looking at this issue since our arrival in the House of Commons and this morning is an ideal time to speak about it.

As you know, in the case of trusts taxes can now be deferred until the last beneficiary has died. In some cases, this represents 80 years of tax deferral. With tax planning horizons as distant as this, you can be sure that the government will be seeing very little revenue indeed. There are limits—taxes cannot always be avoided—but the longer they can be deferred, the more possibilities there are and the greater the amount due will vary.

I therefore have some reservations about the motion, and rightly so, in my opinion. Not that we need linger too long over the motive for the motion. I can recall people, particularly artists, calling for income averaging. Given that only people in certain sectors are affected by it, I think it should be looked at more closely.

The hon. member seems to have examined the question very carefully because there was a similar system in the past. He should now focus his attention on specific groups in certain areas of economic activity rather than on all taxpayers. When this is done, it will be possible to comment with more assurance. At this stage, there are arguments for and against.

We understand the reasons for the motion, but cannot give our support to something this broad. The goal is very obviously to allow all high-income earners to average their income, but it could lead to some odd situations. Would not those with high salaries or income from company profits—in other words, dividends from businesses they own—have an opportunity to average even more of their income than is already the case? They will have two ways of allocating their dividends or corporate revenues. This will produce rather surprising results at the fiscal level.

Public finances being what they are at present, I doubt very much that such an idea could be put forward. Since allowing this would reduce the tax impact on certain clients—artists, self-employed and seasonal workers were mentioned—such a measure would deprive us of revenues.

I think that we should secure revenues from other sources. Of course, a motion cannot pursue several goals at the same time, but we should keep in mind the need to look for revenues elsewhere. If we stay with the same approach, we may have to look at corporate or trust tax deferrals, particularly the extraordinary revenue losses from family trusts whose renewal had been allowed by the previous government. The current government, for its part, does not appear committed to correcting the situation as it does not seem to believe that there are large revenues to be collected from this sector.

In conclusion, although the goal is commendable, the motion is much too broad and troubling because everyone would be allowed to average their income. It would be difficult to support the motion but, given its goals, the hon. member could explain it further and ensure that specific sectors are targeted, in particular the arts community. From there we could move on to a private member's bill or something more concrete in order to get good results.

[English]

Mr. Jim Abbott (Kootenay East): Madam Speaker, the entrepreneurial spirit is a driving force to the Canadian economy. I say again that there is a particular group of Canadians who are a driving force in the Canadian economy. They are the entrepreneurs. They are the people who get up in the morning with a blank page in their diary and go to bed at night having filled that page by exhibiting personal initiative. They have filled that page with creative, productive activity.

(1135)

The entrepreneurial spirit moves forward with no boss pushing. These are the self-starters. Truly, if they do not do it, it will not get done. They are the farmers, ranchers, fruit growers, independent small business people, artists, writers, people in real estate sales or sales in general, freelancers and consultants.

Let us define what we are talking about here. We are talking about taxation and the way it relates to the entrepreneur. Tax is an arbitrary confiscation of wealth by government so that it may provide services and under political direction redistribute that wealth. The wealth is in the form of dollars and cents. It is capital. We are talking about the confiscation of capital for altruistic purposes. What we are really talking about is fairness in the taxation system.

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I support the thrust of the motion because I believe the current tax system discriminates against entrepreneurs who are, I state again, a major driving force in the Canadian economy.

Assuming that the government historically has not intentionally discriminated against the entrepreneur, this question still must be asked: Now that it has been drawn to the government's attention, why would it want to continue to discriminate against people who have the handicap of never seeing a steady month to month paycheque? Why should these people have to suffer the disadvantage of irregular income along with the other insecurities of trying to provide for their families' welfare, their children's education and their own futures?

In debate in the House on September 20, 1991, Lee Richardson, member of Parliament and Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, said in part:

When income of individuals fluctuates significantly from year to year, the total of the income taxes they pay over several years may be greater than if their income stream has been more constant over that period. This is because in those years, when incomes were high, they are subject to higher marginal tax rates and thus pay a greater portion of their income in tax. In such circumstances, averaging the income over a number of years would result in lower taxes each year, thus lowering the total tax burden over that period.

Using farmers as an example, in the same debate at page 2500 of *Hansard* the member for Edmonton Southeast said:

I would like to pick up a thread that was made, I think, yesterday by a member. Right now the average farmer in Canada produces food for about 95 to 100 Canadians. At the same time, since most farmers are men, his spouse has to go off the farm to earn money to feed the family on the farm. That is a catastrophe.

I believe and support the point the member for Edmonton Southeast was making that currently the tax system discriminates against the family farm. In many cases it forces an undesirable situation within families.

Staying with the same example of the farmer, in a letter from Mr. Ken Gadick of Folkman and Gadick, chartered accountants in my riding of Creston, British Columbia, he says:

The taxpayer in question reports his income on a cash basis, meaning revenues are reported only when received and expenses reported only when paid. For the first time, the farmer has sold almost his entire crop prior to the end of his current fiscal year. Furthermore, in almost every sale case he would be able to collect the cash also prior to his year end. However, this would put him in the position of receiving two crop years of revenue in one fiscal period, the 1993 and 1994 crop revenue. As this would mean a large absolute increase in the amount of income tax he would be paying, he has made the nonsensical business decision to ask his customers to not make their payments to him until after his year end. In turn, he has had to ask his bank to extend his line of credit, incurring unnecessary financing costs.

In a case such as this some form of averaging of income may have benefited the taxpayer by allowing him to collect the cash, reducing his need for financing from the bank and no increase in his overall tax burden.

(1140)

As shown in Mr. Gadick's letter about farmers, the impediments are common with impediments to all small business people and individuals who are concerned about cash flow or

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having to become involved with interest payments which result specifically from the action of the current burdensome taxation system that confiscates wealth or the working capital they so desperately need. This can lead to a situation where the business person or individual has to make some nonsensical business decisions.

Other examples of individuals would fall into the area of real estate sales people and especially sales people who are on 100 per cent commission. They frequently cannot control when their next commission cheque is going to arrive. This group includes writers who want to work on books, reporters who sell their columns by the word or staff people with professional skills or extensive background work and experience who, when they encounter layoffs, become consultants and work on contract.

There is a growing pool of experienced contract workers who are serving the business community well. Additionally there are artists who have work in progress who may be forced to push forward a finished product.

At the risk of overusing the agriculture example, in my constituency with the downturn of demand for Delicious red apples many orchardists in Creston pulled up their apple trees and replanted a specific form of Japanese cherry. This was a very prudent decision to build revenue for the future. However it has serious taxation implications because of the inability to average income.

A parallel example would be that the inability to average income could hamper entrepreneurs as they try to improve or change their current situation. Business people need flexibility in the taxation system in order to retool or invest in response to market pressures. If they cannot rationally make changes it is an impediment to productivity.

Let me restate that I support the motion because I fully acknowledge there is a particular group of Canadians who are a major driving force in the Canadian economy. I support the entrepreneurs and their entrepreneurial spirit.

[*Translation*]

SITTING SUSPENDED

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): As no other member wishes to speak and since the motion was not selected as a votable item, the time provided for the consideration of Private Members' Business has now expired. Pursuant to Standing Order 96(1), this item is dropped from the Order Paper.

The sitting of the House is hereby suspended until 12 p.m.

(At 11.43 a.m. the sitting of the House was suspended.)

[*English*]

SITTING RESUMED

The House resumed at 12 p.m.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*Translation*]

DEPARTMENT OF CANADIAN HERITAGE ACT

Hon. Michel Dupuy (Minister of Canadian Heritage) moved that Bill C-53, an act to establish the Department of Canadian Heritage and to amend and repeal certain other acts, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

He said: Madam Speaker, I am delighted to move second reading of the bill to grant official legal status to the Department of Canadian Heritage created one year ago. Passage of this bill will enable the department to pursue its mandate with confidence and enthusiasm.

At first, we had some reservations about the name of the Department of Canadian Heritage. What did Canadian heritage mean, and what reason could be given to justify consolidating in a single department such diverse elements as communications, cultural industries, official and heritage languages, national parks and historic sites, voluntary action, multiculturalism, state ceremonial and amateur sport? But if we think of the word "heritage" in its broadest sense, that is to say the set of signs that enable us to recognize ourselves as individuals who belong to a group or even a country, then the department's name is fitting.

Heritage is closely linked to questions of individual and national identity, which is why it can have such far-reaching and important influence. In today's world of changing geopolitical borders where the map of the world is being redrawn and nationalist groups around the globe are making constant demands, the Department of Canadian Heritage is in a sense the flagship of Canadian identity.

Each and every unit of the department is connected in some way to the soul of Canada. Combined, these units form a striking picture of what we were in the past, what we are today and what we want to be in the future. It is therefore impossible today to limit the meaning of heritage to the legacy of years gone by. Heritage is far more than a collection of remnants of the past; it is the manifestation of a link between the members of a community and a means of defining the relationship between the community and the world around it. From this perspective, although the scope of the activities undertaken by the Department of Canadian Heritage may seem huge, it is entirely justified.

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The Department of Canadian Heritage is active in three main areas that have a common objective namely, promoting Canadian identity. First, the department is the chief custodian of the natural and physical heritage comprising our national parks, our historic monuments and canals; these sites highlight the uniqueness of our country and contribute to Canada's reputation as a tourist destination. Our rich natural and historic heritage includes 36 national parks, 750 historic sites, nine historic canals and four marine areas located throughout Canada. Stretching from Ellesmere Island National Park in the Arctic Circle to Point Pelee National Park on the shores of the Great Lakes, from the Cape Spear lighthouse on the Atlantic coast to Pacific Rim National Park, they are among the most beautiful gems of world heritage.

(1205)

Parks Canada will continue to protect, preserve and promote these sites which Canadians hold dear. The traditions of the Parks Canada program, now embraced by the Department of Canadian Heritage, have very deep roots. They date back to 1885, when Canada's first national park was created in Banff. Our network of historic sites was established more than 75 years ago. In a short while, we will be celebrating with joy and pride the 75th anniversary of Parks Canada.

Canada's parks and historic sites are important to the national economy, generating annual revenue in excess of one billion dollars, including some \$275 million from foreign tourists, and providing jobs for roughly 30,000 Canadian men and women. They are the lifeblood of the Canadian tourism industry; in 1992, almost 27 million people visited our national parks and historic sites.

Second, the Department of Canadian Heritage devotes much of its attention to promotion of the official languages, amateur sport, community support and participation and other cultural elements that enrich our own culture and set us apart in today's world economy.

The history of this country has to a large extent been shaped by successive waves of immigration and the interaction between the newcomers and the society in their new country. The way immigrants adapt their way of life to Canadian society will continue to be a determining factor in the Canadian identity, and the Department of Canadian Heritage plans to take an active role in making their integration as successful as possible.

We have to realize that the co-existence of cultures is one of the biggest challenges facing countries around the world as the century draws to a close. Canada has always been in step with the many cultures that can be found here. This diversity includes vast human resources that are part of Canada today and that could be, in a world with an increasingly globalized economy and culture, a definite asset in maintaining our place on the world stage. It is also a virtually limitless cultural resource that

we can use to our advantage and that sets us apart from other countries.

The Department of Canadian Heritage plans to tap these resources and encourage all cultural communities to contribute to the growth and development of Canadian society. We hope to rally the mighty forces of multiculturalism behind a cultural identity that is uniquely Canadian.

Amateur sport and related events, like the Canada Games and the XVth Commonwealth Games held this summer in Victoria, are a fundamental vehicle for fostering and illustrating important Canadian values such as the pursuit of excellence and cultural diversity. In this regard, I would like to take this opportunity to say again how happy we are to be hosting the 1999 Pan-American Games in Winnipeg. We also hope that Quebec city will be given the honour of playing host to the Winter Olympics in 2002 and are working to make that a reality.

(1210)

We have inherited a country whose strength comes not only from its cultural diversity, but also its linguistic duality. Preserving and promoting our official languages do not make Canada a real Tower of Babel. It is important not only to protect the right of individuals to speak whichever language they prefer, but also to realize that the English and French languages open the doors to two of the greatest sources of universal culture.

Canada's official languages are inextricably linked to Canadian identity and culture. For this reason, it is vital for a department like ours and for society as a whole to promote them and broaden their sphere of influence.

[English]

Moreover, in these days of market globalization, knowing two of the most widely spoken languages in the world is a definite plus. English is an official language in no fewer than 33 countries around the world, French in 25 countries. From a purely economic standpoint our two official languages already give us an edge in our efforts to conquer new markets.

Of course we must not forget the incredible number of international languages spoken by new Canadians. Their language skills are critical in expanding our trade and cultural relations to new countries.

The fact remains however that the linguistic landscape in Canada is dominated by two official languages as English or French is spoken by 98.6 per cent of the population. To ensure that both languages continue to thrive in all regions of the country the Department of Canadian Heritage is committed to supporting the development and enhancing the vitality of linguistic minority communities in all sectors and encouraging Canadians to learn their second official language.

Specifically the department's aim is to give these communities the means to ensure their own economic development which is the key to a better future. With this objective in mind it has taken measures to encourage all federal institutions to promote

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the full development of minority official language communities, measures which I announced this summer during the Acadian World Congress.

Third, the department is focusing its efforts on the management of cultural development in Canada and on means of communication which are crucial not only in ensuring our uniqueness but also as a powerful instrument of economic development. Culture is not an abstract concept separate from the real world, nor is it mere decoration. It is first and foremost a way of looking at the world and a manifestation of our civilization. This unique view of the world is one of the features that allows one group to distinguish itself from others. In short, without culture, there is no identity.

In this age of trade globalization and amid the proliferation of information technologies, our cultural resources have become not only a means for Canada to carve out a place for itself on the world stage but also a powerful economic lever. The numbers speak for themselves.

In 1991-92 the cultural sector accounted in total for 3.7 per cent of the gross domestic product or approximately \$22 billion. In addition, the sector employed almost half a million people, which represents a rate of employment growth of approximately 21 per cent between 1986-87 and 1991-92. The economic impact of culture is far too great to be left entirely to chance.

(1215)

The rate of growth may be impressive but it must not overshadow the problems our industries have to address. I need not point out that cultural industries do not have the capital or the market to compete in Canada with the big producers of mass culture, namely our neighbour to the south, the United States, the richest cultural market in the world and one which is increasingly visible in Canada because of the new distribution technologies.

Bringing all cultural functions together in a single department will enable the Government of Canada to take more concrete action, making it possible to defend the interests of the cultural community, our cultural community, on many fronts. From this standpoint the department's responsibilities are primarily national in scope. The department has a duty to contribute to the emergence of Canadian culture, foster a sense of belonging and instil national pride. It is responsible for providing funding for and encouraging the development of cultural agencies that have a national mandate such as the CBC, the National Arts Centre, the Canada Council, the National Theatre School, Telefilm Canada and the National Film Board. It is also responsible for museums, archives and the National Library.

The department also has to spearhead legislation aimed at fostering the full development of creative activity in Canada.

The aim of copyright legislation, for example, is to enable our authors, producers and performers to earn a decent living from their crafts and be fairly compensated for their work.

Let us get one thing clear. After a very long period under the former government during which culture suffered from marginalization and was considered merely as a distraction, not to mention a luxury, we must bring back culture to the forefront of society's concerns, for it is essential to our identity, to our pride, to our unity and to our independence in international society.

Culture contributes to our quality of life. It is part of the ever richer heritage that is our legacy to future generations. The Department of Canadian Heritage has international responsibilities relating to the promotion, distribution and marketing of Canadian culture. For example, the department is expected to negotiate agreements on cultural exchanges with other countries and identify foreign outlets for Canadian cultural products.

In keeping with this mandate the department was actively involved in the development of TV-5, the international French language television network that serves as a cultural and commercial window for French language programs and francophone artists from Canada and other French speaking countries.

The Department of Canadian Heritage also has a mandate to ensure Canadian participation in international exhibitions. The most recent Canadian initiatives of this type took place last year in Taejon, South Korea, one of Canada's largest export markets. It produced excellent results as Canada banked on economic partnership for the first time. Exhibitions of this kind are outstanding international fora that combine both culture and communications. They are also an important part of the mission of the Department of Canadian Heritage.

For example, the government's commitment to implementing a Canadian strategy for the information superhighway augurs well for the cultural industries. The super highway is far more than a technological infrastructure. It will be a powerful vehicle for Canadian content and will ensure wider distribution of our cultural products, making them more accessible to all Canadians.

(1220)

The department is particularly sensitive to broadcasting issues, as broadcasting is without question the most popular and the most powerful of all cultural media. More than 99 per cent of Canadians own a radio; 99 per cent also own a television set; and more than 75 per cent own a video cassette recorder.

Because broadcasters are among the companies most vulnerable to competition from their American rivals, the Department of Canadian Heritage has to be very vigilante and adopt policies and programs that make Canadian culture as accessible to Canadians as possible.

Clearly the mission of the Department of Canadian Heritage is closely linked to the major issues facing Canada today. Our agenda is very full and our mission extends into many sectors of Canadian society.

It is more important now than ever before to start thinking of Canada's cultural complexity as an asset in an age when openness to rest of the world is as important as the preservation of our identities. That is where the Department of Canadian Heritage comes in. The Department of Canadian Heritage does not deal exclusively with the past, but it is focused on the future. It is at the nerve centre of the major challenges facing contemporary society.

The department I have the honour of overseeing must have official legal status if it is to continue its work of fostering the emergence of a strong cultural identity in Canada.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Suzanne Tremblay (Rimouski—Témiscouata): Madam Speaker, the Canadian government is coming to the House of Commons today for second reading of Bill C-53, an act to establish the Department of Canadian Heritage and to amend and repeal certain other acts.

First of all, the surprising thing is that the government took nearly a year to draft Bill C-53, which for all practical purposes confirms what Prime Minister Kim Campbell announced when her cabinet was sworn in in the summer of 1993. In so doing, the present Prime Minister and his government are confirming the same mistakes in decisions made by the previous government when for economic reasons Ms. Campbell decided to reduce the size of cabinet and merge several departments; among those decisions was the creation of the Department of Canadian Heritage. This is totally unacceptable, both for Canadians and for Quebecers.

At first glance, this bill seems to be a purely technical measure that should pass quickly without lengthy debate, since its primary purpose is to establish a department, Canadian Heritage, and amend all related laws accordingly. After thoroughly examining this bill, we unfortunately must come to the conclusion that such is not the case.

This bill is more than a purely technical measure. It would create a department where the minister would have the following powers, duties and functions, under clause 5:

—initiate, recommend, coordinate, implement (and promote) national policies, projects and programs with respect to Canadian identity and values, cultural development, heritage—

Madam Speaker, through you, I draw the attention of members of this House to the fact that the adjective "Canadian" refers to the following four items in the list I just read, so it should be taken to read as follows: "In exercising the powers and performing the duties and functions (assigned to the minis-

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ter by section 4), the minister shall initiate, recommend, coordinate, implement (and promote) national policies, projects and programs with respect to Canadian identity, Canadian values, Canadian cultural development and Canadian heritage".

(1225)

Accordingly, you will not be at all surprised to learn that the Bloc Québécois cannot support such a bill, for many reasons, but mainly these.

First, this bill shamelessly infringes on what so far has been considered provincial jurisdiction: culture.

Second, the steadfast obstinacy of the Canadian government in refusing to recognize the distinctiveness of Quebec society is totally unacceptable.

Third, based on our reading of this bill and on the old saying that the past is a guide to the future, it is far from obvious that the Department of Canadian Heritage provides the guarantees required to defend the French language and culture, especially those needed for the francophone and Acadian communities in Canada to continue to develop, flourish and even exist.

Mr. Milliken: It is in the Constitution.

Mrs. Tremblay: Let me speak, please, sir.

Fourth, Canadian culture is in danger, given the government's inability and lack of political will to correct its predecessor's mistakes.

As regards cultural rights, telecommunications and the electronic highway, the government maintains the existing division of jurisdictional responsibilities between the ministers of Canadian Heritage and Industry.

Put simply, this means that the Minister of Canadian Heritage will be responsible for the content, while his colleague from Industry will be in charge of the means required, such as wires, optical fibres, microwaves, etc. In other words, the former will be responsible for culture, while the latter will look after the business side of things. However, the recent experience with Ginn Publishing makes us wonder about this arrangement. The minister responsible for culture had only one thing to protect, culture, but he had no weight. Consequently, the influence of the Minister of Industry, who pledged allegiance to the U.S., prevailed. We think that maintaining the artificial dichotomy created by the previous government is to recognize the supremacy of the dollar over cultural and social values which apparently—but only apparently—do not always seem to be the most profitable ones. Consequently, the bill before us makes us fear the worse as regards the future of Canadian culture.

Let us see what is meant by the provinces' jurisdiction. The Canadian Constitution, that of 1867, gives provinces certain powers regarding culture and communications. These powers are included in subsection 92(16) of the Constitution Act, 1867,

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which provides that all strictly local and private matters fall under provincial jurisdiction.

Moreover, subsection 13 of the same section recognizes that Quebec has jurisdiction over civil law, which is a fundamental feature of our distinct society. Also, section 93 of the Constitution Act, 1867, confirms that provinces have jurisdiction over education, which is undoubtedly an essential element of the cultural sector.

Finally, section 40 of the Constitution Act, 1982, provides that where an amendment is made under subsection 38(1) regarding education or other cultural matters, Canada shall provide, and I quote: "reasonable compensation to any province to which the amendment does not apply".

So, in reality, provincial legislatures have exclusive jurisdiction over most cultural matters.

(1230)

The federal government has interfered in the cultural jurisdiction only because of its spending power, and we know to what extremes its uncontrolled spending power led it. The federal government must withdraw from that field, because it is using its power in a way that goes against the will Quebecers—and at times other Canadians—have expressed for the last 30 years.

Let us look at the historical demands of Quebec in the cultural area. The federal government's refusal to recognize in this bill the distinct nature of Quebec society is unacceptable. In February 1994, in his address in reply to the throne speech, the hon. leader of the Official Opposition said, and I quote: "Our cultural objectives are closely linked to our collective objectives. Culture is what unites the men and women who want to live together. It represents the essence and the basis of any society. Measures and policies must be undertaken to protect and reinforce Quebec's unique and specific culture".

The mandate of the Minister of Canadian Heritage, as defined in clause 4(1) of this bill being considered at second stage, is as follows: "The powers, duties and functions of the minister extend to and include all matters—relating to Canadian identity and values, cultural development, heritage and areas of natural or historical significance to the nation".

This bill does not refer to Quebec as a distinct society nor mention its cultural specificity. Again, Ottawa deliberately and knowingly ignores Quebec's cultural reality by mixing it in an hypothetical pan-Canadian cultural identity based on bilingualism and multiculturalism, whose risks for Quebec's language and culture have often been denounced.

In doing so, the federal government ignores the historical demands Quebec has made these last 30 years. In 1966, Mr. Daniel Johnson stated that Quebec must make its own decisions concerning its cultural development, in the arts, literature and

linguistic areas. In 1969, Mr. Jean-Jacques Bertrand maintained that cultural affairs were a provincial jurisdiction.

In 1971, under Bourassa, when Quebec went through its cultural sovereignty period, Quebec asked for some changes to the jurisdiction pertaining to culture, under the Constitution. In 1973, Quebec demanded total control over all cultural policy, including the budgets.

In 1975–76, Quebec proposed that every province be able to legislate exclusively in art, literature and heritage matters. In 1978, based on its primary responsibility in cultural and natural heritage matters, Quebec asked the Canadian government to negotiate the return to Quebec of the management of cultural property and historical sites and property located in Quebec.

In 1985, Quebec requested that all grants and contributions given by Ottawa, pursuant to its spending power, to individuals and institutions involved in culture and education be approved by the Quebec government according to its spending power.

In March 1991, the Bélanger-Campeau report said that Quebec should have the exclusive jurisdiction and responsibility over its social, economic and cultural development as well as language matters. In 1991, the Allaire report recommended that culture be Quebec's exclusive jurisdiction.

In 1992, following extended consultations and discussions with major stakeholders, Quebec adopted its own cultural policy statement. On this point, in 1992, Ms. Liza Frulla, Minister of Cultural Affairs in Quebec's previous Liberal government, speaking before the Standing Committee on Culture, said: "As for programs, the federal government does little or no consulting". And also: "When, as often happens, it is faced with a *fait accompli*, Quebec has to state its real needs after the fact".

(1235)

As you can see with this brief historical background, Madam Speaker, successive Quebec governments all agreed in their demands concerning culture and communications. Unfortunately, the federal government almost always turned a deaf ear to these claims, giving way naturally to many a confrontation and overlapping. This kind of overlapping was criticized many times.

Here is what can be found in the Arpin report on the Cultural and Arts Policy, which was submitted to Mrs. Liza Frulla-Hébert in June 1991. "We can conclude that there is obvious duplication between the two levels of government in terms of program structure, in terms of clients and even in terms of legislative and tax measures. We can even say that this duplication is driving up the costs. There are differences in directions and priorities depending on the clients. Some measures taken by the federal government go completely against Quebec's options. The harmonization of interventions by both levels of government has always been difficult. The federal government has

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never been willing to recognize Quebec's supremacy with regard to culture".

It is not surprising that this government would introduce such a bill. The Prime Minister's whole career has been centred on one important thing: to counter the recognition of Quebec's unique character.

Remember that during the 1980 referendum campaign, he made a lot of promises regarding the Constitution. Since then, he has refused any type of constitutional negotiations with Quebec and is doing everything possible to try and grab powers that have traditionally belonged to Quebec.

Remember also that in 1982, without warning Quebec, the then negotiator who is Prime Minister today secretly concluded, in the middle of the night, a constitutional accord with the English-speaking provinces. The main purpose of this accord was to strip Quebec of an important cultural power, namely the power to legislate on language matters. That is why the National Assembly of Quebec voted unanimously against this federalist attack.

The Meech Lake accord recognized Quebec's unique character. But an ambitious lawyer named Jean Chrétien, who already saw himself as leader of the Liberal Party and future Prime Minister of this country, joined forces with the known enemies of Quebec's unique character, worked hard in secret to kill in the womb any type of affirmation of Quebec's cultural identity and fought ferociously against the distinct society clause. The Prime Minister showed us then who he really is. It is very difficult to believe today that he is and still feels like a true Quebecer.

The refusal by Jean Chrétien's federal government to recognize Quebec's unique character does not surprise me. It is obvious that his government has no desire to see to it that Quebec's culture and language can blossom within the Canadian confederation, but that it would rather see that province's unique character die a slow but sure death.

All Canadians witnessed recently the situation where the Prime Minister tried to have Quebecers pay a double price because their government had wanted to hold a referendum according to their own specificity. That is totally unacceptable. The referendum legislation and election rules are part of the distinctness of Quebec. Its respect for democracy has led Quebec to adopt, in the area of electoral equity, a legislation which is comparable to no other in Canada or elsewhere in the world.

This refusal by the federal government to admit the distinct character of Quebec has serious consequences and generates all kinds of duplication and overlapping.

(1240)

We must remember that duplication caused by the intrusion of the federal government in the cultural area, which normally is under provincial jurisdiction, cost Canadian taxpayers hundreds of millions of dollars. Acknowledgement of the distinctness of Quebec by the federal government would mean a repatriation of the cultural sector and of all the related budgetary envelopes. It would result in some important savings and would be more attuned to the logic which has been fundamental to Canadian cultural policy for many years.

How can the Governor General explain the dual principle in terms of culture? Clause 4.(2) of the proposed legislation states that the Minister's jurisdiction encompasses jurisdiction over, and I quote:

(j) the formulation of cultural policy as it relates to foreign investment;

In other words, for the last thirty years, Canadian cultural policies have been aimed at limiting foreign investments in the cultural area in order to ensure the survival of the Canadian culture. At the same time, and according to the same fundamental principle, that is the safeguard of the Canadian culture, Canadian governments have tried to impose to the various media a minimum Canadian content and ownership.

According to these principles, the Canadian government is saying that governments must defend their culture, that it must not be left in foreign hands or allowed to be submerged by a foreign culture. Canada should therefore recognize the fact that Quebec is in the best position to defend its culture, which is different from Canada's.

When the subject is Quebec culture, all those high-sounding principles supported, for instance, by the Canadian intellectual elite, fall by the wayside. Then they call it isolationism, tribalism and narrow-mindedness. When one hears such vehement statements, one wonders why Canada, as a sign of protest and to deny any hint of narrow-mindedness and isolationism, does not simply put its culture into the hands of the Americans. If managing their culture is good for Canadians, why would it be so bad for Quebecers? Again, a double standard.

Under Canadian federalism, English Canada has the right to defend its culture against the American invader, but Quebec should drop its own culture, according to the bill before the House today. They want to make us all one nation and deny there are two. There are two nations in this country, and the act to establish the Department of Canadian Heritage should reflect an awareness of the situation in Quebec and the flexibility that Quebec needs to develop and prosper.

This bill contains no guarantees for the French language and culture in Canada. Instead of defending French language and culture, the Department of Canadian Heritage is being used by

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the Canadian government to undermine French language and culture in Canada.

The Department of Canadian Heritage administers all programs connected with clause 4(2)(g) of the Act, and I quote:

(g) the advancement of the equality of status and use of English and French and the enhancement and development of English and French linguistic minority communities in Canada;

First of all, it is strange the legislation does not refer to the equality of French and English. According to the department, however, this kind of wording would be far too coercive, although the present minister is French speaking. The legislation therefore refers to advancement, to moving towards a hypothetical equality.

Since for the past 125 years or more, we have been moving nowhere at all, francophones can hardly be expected to believe they will get there some day.

Similarly, the Canadian government is careful to avoid any reference in this bill to recognizing and promoting the position of Canada's two founding nations, since such recognition would have involved genuinely defending the French language and culture in Canada. Inequality between francophones and anglophones in Canada is systematic. There are many examples, and I will mention a few that struck me after I got to Ottawa.

Example No. 1: I suggest that members who receive their weekly green list of government publications compare the number of documents available to anglophones and francophones. On the list, it usually says that the French version will be available later on.

(1245)

Example No. 2: It is a fiction that a francophone can make himself understood and obtain services in his own language across Canada. Even some of our so-called bilingual public servants are unable to provide services in French. Even here in the federal government, in the national capital, once you get past the token francophone, there is a complete vacuum: almost everything is in English. So much so that even the Assistant Deputy Minister for Cultural Affairs of the Minister of Canadian Heritage is losing his francophone roots and testifies in English before the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage. Thousands are being assimilated every day within the very precincts of the federal government, because they know that English means more status, more advancement and, as a result, better pay.

I challenge the government to order a private company that is serious and strictly impartial—which automatically excludes the Commissioner of Official Languages—to find out to what extent a francophone can expect to receive the same level of service from the federal government in his own language. If the government refuses to take up this challenge, I am prepared to

prove my point by revealing a number of bilingual positions held by people who do not know a word of French. When people find out what positions are involved and which citizens are affected by these positions, they will be flabbergasted.

Example No. 3: Contrary to their anglophone colleagues, francophones working for the federal government must, for the most part, work in what is for them a second language. It is a whole class of citizens who are being assimilated. In this respect, the federal government behaves exactly the same way—especially in the national capital region—that private companies did in the late 1960s in Quebec, when francophones were not allowed to speak French even while smoking in the cafeteria. As soon as they entered the plant, they had to speak English. I demand an independent and earnest inquiry into this matter. This of course excludes the Commissioner of Official Languages.

Moreover, I am asking all French speaking civil servants, especially those in the national capital region, who are required to work exclusively in English, to systematically complain to the Commissioner of Official Languages so that he can no longer hide behind the lack or small number of complaints to avoid taking action and severely reprimanding a government which claims to promote French language and culture but which forbids a significant number of its French-speaking employees to work in their own language. I will add that it would be useful to send me a copy of the complaints so that I can act upon them, while preserving the complainants' anonymity, and defend in the House of Commons French speaking civil servants who have been deprived of their fundamental rights.

Similarly, how can it be explained that the federal public service in Quebec, excluding the Outaouais region, is made up of 54 per cent bilingual positions, which are truly bilingual, whereas in Ontario, excluding the national capital region, only 8 per cent of positions are bilingual? Given the respective minority, English in Quebec and French in Ontario, to be fair, 25 per cent of positions in the Ontario federal civil service should be bilingual.

This shows how little the federal government cares about its French minority and how great his concerns for its English minority in Quebec are. As a matter of fact, the federal government is using its civil service to impose bilingualism on Quebec. After all, when every francophone can speak English, who will need French?

I will remind my hon. colleagues that the promotion and development of French and English minorities in Canada is one of the responsibilities of the Department of Canadian Heritage. The only minority in Canada which does not have its own schools—and when it does they do not have toilets or running water—, which hardly has any cultural instruments, which does not have health services or social services in its own language, is the French-speaking minority. The maximum of services should

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go to this minority. If cuts are necessary, they should not be made at the expense of the neediest.

(1250)

I am surprised that this principle, considered so sound in other areas, should not be acceptable when it comes to francophones. The minister wants to cut \$25 million from cultural minorities in Canada, on top of the other 5 to 8 per cent cut that the Minister of Finance is considering and which will not spare the minorities.

The minister confirmed these cuts in a document he called "Confidence in the future". When I see such a title and when I consider the content of this document, I wonder how the French-speaking minority will make out.

Indeed, like the English-speaking minority, it must decide itself where the axe will fall and it must cut to the same extent as the English-speaking minority in Quebec. Yet, the minister, who has discretionary powers, should make his savings at the expense of those who can afford it, that is the English minority in Quebec.

The minister must cut where the need is least, and not across the board. The English minority has its own school system, its health system and social services, its cultural network. So the minister, ever respectful of social and cultural justice, should put the burden of the cuts on those who can support them, irrespective of the language they speak.

Moreover, all input of public money intended to promote bilingualism: immersion classes, scholarships and so on, should be cancelled. On the issue of cuts the minister is acting like a doctor who can choose between giving a cardiac massage to a patient in danger or teaching a person in very good health how to give a cardiac massage.

The lack of logic in the distribution of jurisdictions between the departments is a threat to Canadian culture. As I said earlier in my statement, Bill C-53 aims at establishing legally the Department of Canadian Heritage. Canadians could rightly expect the government to put some order in its house. One would have expected the government to take this opportunity to organize a bit more strictly the various jurisdictions dealing with heritage. But it seems to be asking too much of the Liberal government. For instance copyright, which is directly linked to culture, will come under the jurisdiction of the Department of Industry as provided in Bill C-46.

Remember that the Prime Minister and the Minister of Canadian Heritage stated officially and unequivocally that the adoption of phase II of the copyright legislation was a priority. Apparently this was only baked wind since by favouring the Department of Industry over the Department of Canadian Heritage, the government is forcing Canadian Heritage officials, who are defending the copyright, to submit to the dictates of

their colleagues at Industry who think first of all in terms of dollar bills.

As a matter of fact, the latter will always be able to argue, during the numerous interdepartmental quarrels that will ensue, that it is their right and that they have the last word since copyright comes under their jurisdiction. The most tragic aspect of that story is what it underlies. The government has already told us in the Ginn case that the cost effectiveness of culture, be it American or another, must come before the need to protect the Canadian culture. In other words, the Department of Industry is willing to sell large segments of the Canadian cultural industry to Americans.

This is why the Department of Canadian Heritage has approved the sale of the important Canadian publishing house Ginn Publishing to an American company. Once more, having to choose between Canadian cultural integrity and its wish to not displease the Americans, this government has chosen to grovel before the Americans.

I remind members that the Minister of Canadian Heritage tried to justify his actions by saying that there had been a verbal agreement between a junior official and Paramount.

For obvious reasons copyright reform that the cultural industry is waiting for so impatiently because it is crucial to its survival will probably be shelved. The same lack of logic which seems to be the trademark of the governing party has prevailed in the case of telecommunications which were cut up into so many pieces. The government could have taken the opportunity to answer the industry's long standing request and regroup the whole of telecommunications in the Department of Canadian Heritage and, in so doing, make up for the mistakes of the Campbell administration.

(1255)

Even when I arrived in Ottawa, the deputy minister told me that this was a monumental mistake, that he intended to recommend to the present minister that it be corrected when the department was created. Once again, the Department of Industry, no doubt a heavier player in the cabinet, inherited the lion's share of jurisdiction in the field of telecommunications.

Chances are that the Liberal government, who so staunchly defends federalism, and by extension, the duplication of services, continued overlap, and the waste of money, will see this division of the field of telecommunications as an opportunity to form joint committees of civil servants seconded from here and there. It will be an opportunity to increase the numbers of civil servants, committees, meetings, all those things that are a waste of taxpayers' money, but that for the Canadian government, and its deficit in the hundreds of billions of dollars, is the federalist thing to do.

For why simplify when it is so easy to complicate matters? In this bill, the government, true to form, is merely ratifying

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reform put forward by others. What did we expect? It has done nothing new since it came to power one year ago.

Fortunately, in the near future—and I will not mention dates, that would only stir things up—the people of Quebec will be asked to choose between an unlikely cultural existence as part of Canada and a cultural existence as a sovereign state. The federalists will point to venerable institutions like Radio-Canada as proof of the cultural viability of the Canadian federation.

When we know that the endangered culture in Canada is the French culture, we cannot believe that this very federal and very federalist imbalance will ensure its survival in the Canadian context. No wonder that in a 1980 survey conducted by the Fédération des jeunes Canadiens français, the reply of young French-speaking Canadians when asked in which language they listened to television, radio, video games and videocassettes was “mostly in English”. Perhaps it would not be so, had the federal government not treated them as second-rate citizens culturally.

If Quebec is to survive culturally, it must repatriate all culture-related powers and monies. I should point out in that regard that all the governments in Quebec have been asking for just that for 30 years and that for the past 30 years, this has been denied to everyone of them by the federal government.

Basically, at the next referendum, Quebec will have a choice between two alternatives: cultural death within the Canadian federation and development as a French speaking sovereign state in North America.

That is why I would like to introduce a motion at this time. Seconded by the hon. member for Québec, I move:

That the motion be amended by striking out all the words after the word “That” and substituting the following: “Bill C-53, An Act to establish the Department of Canadian Heritage and to amend and repeal certain other Acts, be not now read a second time but that the Order be discharged, the Bill withdrawn and the subject-matter thereof referred to the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage.”

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): I will take your proposal under advisement and advise you in a moment as to its admissibility. I would suggest that you continue with your remarks in the meantime.

(1300)

Mrs. Tremblay: Madam Speaker, the main thing about our motion to defer second reading, to not read this bill a second time but to refer it instead to the committee, is that it is absolutely essential in our view that all the overlapping in the cultural area be reviewed and really reported on to this House. This bill, which had probably been drafted by the previous government, meets Ms. Campbell's wishes. It must be amended to avoid all sources of conflict, all overlapping, all unnecessary expenditure of Canadian taxpayers' money, and particularly to

ensure that the Quebec community can see its uniqueness reflected in this bill.

Understandably, Madam Speaker, it is impossible for a Quebecer to feel at ease as part of the Canadian Heritage.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): Your motion is admissible, hon. member.

Before giving the floor to someone else, I would like to remind the House that sometimes, with motions, we forget that it is not our practice to name individual members of this House. We can refer to them by their titles or ridings but not by name. I did not rise but that was done several times and I would ask all hon. members to be more careful.

Mrs. Tremblay: When I named the Prime Minister, I was referring to him when he was a lawyer. I could not say “Prime Minister” as he was just a lawyer at the time—

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): I will check the “blues” but I think you are mistaken. If I am wrong, I will get back to you, but I would first like to see the blues for that part of the debate.

[English]

Mrs. Jan Brown (Calgary Southeast): Madam Speaker, I rise today to speak to Bill C-53, an act to establish the Department of Canadian Heritage.

Before I begin my speech I would like to state for the record that in order for a reasonable and conscientious debate to take place, as we are hoping to do with this bill, it would be greatly appreciated rather than receiving an amendment 20 minutes before rising to speak in the House that we be given an adequate response time. This has happened continuously throughout this session of Parliament and I do object most strenuously.

The bill is intended to establish legislatively some of the changes to government that the member for Sherbrooke and his Conservatives bequeathed to us in Parliament. In reality it is nothing more than moving the tables and chairs of a bloated bureaucracy. There is no downsizing, no cost savings. It is the status quo once more, the consistent refrain of a Liberal government that has become one of review, study, consult, discuss. Quite frankly it is do nothing mumbo-jumbo.

I am going to address a number of issues today explaining why my colleagues and I will oppose the bill. Further I will address those changes that should be made to the bill which would allow my Reform colleagues and I to support it. Having just heard the Bloc amendment, in principle I can say we will support it because it will move the bill to committee for further extensive examination.

With respect to the bill itself we oppose it for a number of reasons. First, it will legislatively entrench multiculturalism spending, national enforced bilingualism and the funding of

special interest groups, all of which the Reform Party is ideologically opposed to. Second, the establishment of the department will not streamline, will not result in downsizing and will not result in any financial savings. In fact the bill will end up costing Canadian taxpayers.

In June 1993 shortly after taking office then Prime Minister Kim Campbell announced what were supposed to be sweeping changes to government. The changes were intended to streamline the bureaucracy to make it more efficient and more cost effective. As the bill demonstrates, none of these objectives were accomplished by the changes which the Progressive Conservatives proposed.

(1305)

The Tories had put forward a concept which was simply window dressing in an attempt to satisfy voters who were looking for leadership in a government that had continually demonstrated its arrogance by showing it did not care about the size of government, the accountability of government, the responsibility of government, or the cost of government. Canadians continued to believe as I do that they remain overgoverned.

Attempting to change that impression the Tories decided to reconstruct a smaller cabinet, to downsize government. We all know what a good job they did to change public perception. They did such a good job that they suffered the largest electoral defeat in the history of the country.

Now we have the Liberals who inherited these proposed changes to government. It is astonishing but they actually appear satisfied with these leftover, stale Tory ideas, satisfied enough to implement the changes left to them. It epitomizes a government which has resigned itself to the status quo. There are no new ideas, no creative solutions to the problems we face and there is continued disdain for the best interests of Canadians.

I find it difficult to understand why the Liberals have introduced Bill C-53 at this time. The president of the Queen's Privy Council is undertaking his program review which is purported to be laying the groundwork for the government's restructuring and downsizing. This review is not expected to be completed, so it is reported, until sometime this fall. Why is the Liberal government establishing departments prior to the release of the results of the program review? A number of possible answers come to mind.

Perhaps the government is not planning to make any restructuring changes at all, but this would contradict the Minister of Finance who has already promised there will be cuts made in next year's budget. Perhaps there are some interim results of the review which the government is acting upon but has not yet made public. This action is quite conceivable given the events in

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the House of the past two weeks. Perhaps the Minister of Canadian Heritage has heard from the President of the Privy Council about the restructuring of the Department of Canadian Heritage but remains very content at this time to symbolically move the tables and chairs.

The Department of Canadian Heritage is a mishmash of responsibility, a helter-skelter of activities, programs, departments and bureaucrats. The department is responsible for: the Canada Council; the CBC; Telefilm Canada; the Museum of Civilization; the Museum of Nature; the CRTC; the National Archives; the National Arts Centre; the National Battlefields Commission; the National Capital Commission; the National Film Board; the National Gallery; the National Library; the Museum of Science and Technology; the Public Service Commission; the Advisory Council on the Status of Women; Status of Women Canada; amateur sport and official games; official languages; Parks Canada, historic sites and monuments; Canadian Race Relations Foundation; Canadian Heritage Languages Institute; multiculturalism; and copyright.

There is no strategy, no evident plan for the management of this department. It simply serves as a grab-bag for anything that smacks of heritage. The Liberals have spent no time planning an effective and downsized ministry but have rushed headlong to put Bill C-53 in place giving the minister broad and sweeping powers.

Copyright is a good example of this poor planning. Presently copyright is split between the Departments of Industry and Canadian Heritage. Industry is responsible for the technical side of copyright; heritage is responsible for copyright in so much as it relates to heritage issues. This duplication of responsibility is extremely inefficient.

In fact phase two of the copyright legislation was due last spring, but it was postponed until this fall. Now we hear that phase two of copyright will not be tabled in the House until next spring. The duplication of the responsibility for copyright has resulted in administrative and territorial hassles which have so far put the legislation more than one year behind schedule. It is this kind of inefficiency that Canadians want to see eliminated.

(1310)

Copyright is not a heritage issue. Copyright is commercially based. It is the exclusive legal right granted for a specified period to an author, designer, producer, or another appointed person to print, publish, perform, film, or record original literary, artistic or musical material. All these artistic activities relating to copyright do fall under the auspices of the Department of Canadian Heritage.

However, when creators apply for copyright protection they are essentially protecting a business enterprise. Publishing and distribution rights as well as protection under copyright laws

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create a commercially based business enterprise. This is a view that I support, encouraging more artists to take a business approach to their work. When copyright protection is acquired or sought an artist becomes a businessman or businesswoman.

Currently our copyright laws are antiquated and completely out of sync with other areas of the globe. There is a need for worldwide harmonization. This becomes far removed from the focus of Canadian heritage. In fact it moves copyright beyond the mandate of this ministry.

Support for copyright changes will be driven by financial considerations, irrespective of anything the Bloc Québécois has put forward. It will come from the business community, both domestic and international. This scope is externally driven as our copyright laws must interface with those that exist both within and without the country of Canada. It first must be appreciated that it is essential that copyright responsibilities be delegated to only one ministry.

As I have said, copyright is a business issue which is commercially based and externally driven. As such it should remain within the portfolio of a ministry that deals primarily with the performance and regulation of business and that is the Department of Industry. This same conclusion is drawn from the following example.

Consider a computerized accounting package that is developed in New York, patented there and distributed internationally, including to Canada. Whoever and wherever are the business considerations given to the marketing of that product.

The pirating of such computer programs is reported to cost the computer industry some \$7 billion a year in lost revenue in North America. Whose responsibility should it be to protect the copyright laws in this instance? Surely not the Department of Canadian Heritage. Copyright is part of the international information highway. It should be in the ministry that deals with the organizations that are most affected financially by the legislation. That department is the Department of Industry.

I repeat that I cannot support Bill C-53 at all. As I stated at the outset the intent behind all of this departmental shuffling is to downsize government and to save money. At the briefing for this bill the question was put categorically: Will this bill cause any downsizing of personnel or decreases in spending? The response was equally categorical. It was no.

This fact alone should be sufficient to merit the bill a unanimous rejection by all members of the House. The original intent is now muddled because there will be no downsizing and no reduction in expenditures. The bill failed dismally on its original intent. How can we support a bill which is so fundamentally flawed?

The taxpayers of Canada told the last government in no uncertain terms what they thought of a government that does not keep its promises, that fails to balance its books and that fails to pay its debt.

(1315)

We have in the bill another example of the Liberal government failing to learn from past mistakes. The government does not care about balancing the budget or addressing the national debt. If it did it would begin by restructuring and downsizing government departments.

The state of Canada's finances is shocking. The Liberal government spends over \$110 million more every day than it generates in revenues. Instead of doing something about it, it continues to introduce bills which do not save any money. Nor does it cut spending. Instead it introduces legislation like Bill C-53 that costs Canadians more and more money.

Despite this reason, which is in itself reason enough to oppose the bill, there are others. In fact the bill should have another name. Instead of Bill C-53 it should be short titled the special interest funding bill.

The special interest funding bill grants to the minister the power to spend millions and millions of hard earned taxpayer dollars on such things as grants for thousands of special interest groups.

Canada is in a fiscal crisis. The federal debt is more than \$532 billion. What is needed is a plan to address this dire situation.

The Minister of Finance continues to ask members of the Reform Party for constructive ideas for cutting the deficit. The minister should wake up and pay attention because my colleagues and I have been responding since the beginning of Parliament with good ideas about where to find a whole lot of spending cuts. The Minister of Finance can begin by cutting all federal funding to promote multiculturalism in Canada.

The Reform Party supports a number of principles that I fully endorse and believe in. We believe that the legitimate role of government is to do for people whatever they need to have done but cannot do at all or do as well for themselves individually or through non-government organizations. We believe in the value of enterprise and initiative and that governments have a responsibility to foster and protect an environment in which initiative and enterprise can be exercised by individuals and groups. We believe that public money should be regarded by governments as funds held in trust and that governments should practise fiscal responsibility, in particular responsibility to balance expenditures and revenues.

Having said that, one can understand why I believe in the principle that individuals or groups should be free to present their cultural heritage using their own resources. The Reform

Party opposes the current concept of multiculturalism and hyphenated Canadianism pursued by the Government of Canada. We would end funding of the multicultural program and support the abolition of the department and the Secretary of State for Multiculturalism.

If the Minister of Finance sincerely wants ideas on how to cut his deficit, he will get rid of this aspect of special interest funding and immediately save the Canadian taxpayers some \$38.8 million a year. If we include official languages in this special interest cash cow we can save close to one-quarter of a billion dollars.

Multiculturalism is an idea that is fundamentally flawed and I will spend the next few minutes explaining this point. Multiculturalism was introduced in the House of Commons on October 8, 1971. In the 23 years that have followed it has been politically incorrect for anyone to criticize it, especially in the House of Commons.

In fact members of Parliament from the Tories, the Grits and the NDP have all used the multiculturalism policy in an insincere, superficial and shallow manner to garner political support from ethnic communities. There is now a new voice, another voice of reason in the House of Commons, a Reform voice that takes the wishes of the majority of Canadians to the House on any and all issues. That includes expressing a categorical rejection of the federal government spending money on multiculturalism.

(1320)

We all want the right to retain our roots but what we have is Trudeau's enforced multicultural scams. The costs have been excessive. Ethnic group is pitted against ethnic group and the country is fragmented into 1,000 consciences. Trudeau's ideas about multiculturalism continue to contribute as a primary factor in the erosion of federalism and Canadian unity. Catering to special interest groups à la Trudeau and company smashes the spine of federalism. This destructive outcome is almost inevitable so long as we officially encourage large groups to remain apart from the mainstream.

The multiculturalism policy was designed to recognize and promote the understanding that multiculturalism reflects the cultural and racial diversity of Canadian society and acknowledges the freedom of all members of Canadian society to preserve, enhance and share their cultural heritage. It is intended to promote full and equitable participation of individuals and communities of all origins in all aspects of Canadian life, including equal treatment and equal protection under the law

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while respecting and valuing their diversity. The language of the policy is fairly innocuous and well meaning but in practice it endorses the agendas of special interest groups at the expense of the taxpayer.

Before continuing, let me quote from Philip Resnick's book *Thinking English Canada* as he reflects on multiculturalism and its limits:

The emergence of multiculturalism as a force in Canadian politics was a belated response to a sociological transformation going back to the turn of the century. Waves of immigration pouring into Canada at that period from central, eastern and southern Europe could not with time dilute the overwhelmingly Anglo-Saxon character of Canada outside Quebec. The further migration of millions to this country in the post World War II period and the removal of de facto barriers to non-European migration in the 1960s would deeply alter the face of Canada and its urban centres in particular. Visible minorities from the West Indies, Central and South America, the Far East, the Indian subcontinent, the Middle East, even Africa have taken on a new importance to a point where they will constitute 15 per cent of the total population of Canada by the year 2000. Audible minorities speaking over 100 different languages and mirroring a myriad of cultures have become an integral part of the Canadian mosaic. To deny their specificity and their presence is to play ostrich, redneck or worse.

At the same time, people of diverse backgrounds have chosen to migrate to Canada and, in most cases to become Canadian citizens. This decision means that they and their offspring subscribe to the political, legal, and other features that characterize this country and cannot expect special treatment or recognition as groups apart, nor can they simply import with them blood feuds and hatred from countries from which they originate and give them new expression on Canadian soil. The price of forging a new nationality out of diverse elements is a fair degree of tolerance and goodwill all around.

Reznick continues on multiculturalism:

In one way multiculturalism opens up wonderful opportunities to tap the diversity of Canada's ethnic heritage, itself a microcosm, more and more, of the planet as a whole. To the degree that English Canada, moreover, has become less European or less white, to the degree that it has shed a predominantly British Isles tropism, it has gone beyond ethnicity in laying the foundations for national identity.

Such developments, in Resnick's opinion, are reason for celebration. He says:

English-Canadian society represents a remarkable amalgam of cultural communities and people; wisely it does not require that each of these surrender its identity in order to become Canadian. If English Canada is to develop a sense of itself as a nation, it will be through continuing to foster such open mindedness in the years to come.

Where I would draw the line, however, is with a multiculturalism that might seek to deny a specifically Canadian or English-Canadian identity altogether.

In a world where nationality remains a primary source of identity—whatever the 21st or 25th centuries may bring—English Canadians must be careful not to deny themselves the ability to think of themselves as a nation. National identity requires a primacy for English against any other language, a minimal sense of our past and of the political traditions we have developed, a sense of place, here in the northern part of North America and nowhere else. English Canada is multicultural but it must be based on something more than multiculturalism.

(1325)

Resnick's ideas capture the need we have in Canada for a new vision of federalism.

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The member for Port Moody—Coquitlam placed a question on the Order Paper which requested for 1993 the total amount of funds received by individuals and groups from the Department of Multiculturalism, who these individuals were and how much they received. The response to the question staggered me and should sicken taxpayers.

The response from the government was a 703-page document that detailed 1,350 grants at a cost of \$25,041,939. Let me share some of the outrageous grants that are doled out in the so-called interests of promoting multiculturalism.

Lu Hanessian Productions received \$19,254 to produce a musical review of 27 songs and musical vignettes about human relationships. That is 20,000 taxpayer dollars wasted on a montage of songs that could, indeed should, have been produced with support from the private sector.

The Ottawa—Carleton Learning Foundation spent \$9,044 to study the feasibility of offering engineers courses that integrate first generation Canadian engineers into the profession. Engineers by virtue of being engineers are already fairly privileged. I doubt that they need any further special integration courses. This is an example of the government giving grant money to individuals who do not need it but who should seek professional support from their peers.

The Multicultural Society of Ontario spent \$40,000 on activities related to the Montreal venue of the national tour of many rivers. We do not even know what the activities are, but \$40,000 is a lot of money for a tour of some rivers.

The Folks Arts Council of St. Catharines Multicultural Centre is spending \$28,000 to study the needs of the community with respect to folk arts. This \$28,000 is not even going to multicultural groups themselves. It is going into the pockets of self-appointed experts to determine what the needs of the community are with respect to folk art. This is ridiculous. We have a government spending more time and more money worrying about satisfying folk art needs than it does addressing the debt and deficit.

The Dance Centre will spend \$30,000 bringing dancers together to meet and create a list of dance resources. Here is the Liberal government giving \$30,000 so that dancers can meet and create a list of themselves. This money is not even going to help dancers dance.

As I said, the grants fill 703 pages. This list of outrageous grants goes on and on. This is a 703-page example of government wasting taxpayers' money. These are the kinds of special interest handouts that have to stop.

Canadians remain unsure of what multiculturalism is, what it is trying to do and why and what it can accomplish in a free and democratic society such as ours. Multiculturalism can encompass folk songs, dance, food, festivals, arts and crafts, museums,

heritage languages, ethnic studies, ethnic presses, race relations, culture sharing and human rights. Much of the opposition to multiculturalism results from the indiscriminate application of the term to a wide range of situations, practices, expectations and goals, as well as its institutionalization as state policy, an expensive one at that.

Public support for multiculturalism has been difficult to ascertain. In the early 1970s when the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism recommended the government introduce some ethnocultural policy, public support for multiculturalism was at around 76 per cent. An Angus Reid poll in 1991 shows that figure has not changed much. It remains at 78 per cent. But what can we make of this level of support? Little to nothing, I suggest. For at the same time that this poll was being done, the Citizens' Forum on Canada's Future reported some uneasiness about the Canadian public's attitude toward multiculturalism policy.

(1330)

It stated: "Overwhelmingly, participants told us that reminding us of our different origins is less useful in building a unified country than emphasizing the things we have in common. While Canadians accept and value Canada's cultural diversity, they do not value many of the activities of the multicultural program of the federal government. These are seen as expensive and divisive in that they remind Canadians of their different origins rather than their shared symbols, society and future".

Further, a Decima survey was commissioned by the Canadian Council of Christians and Jews and carried out in October 1993. The survey found that three out of four Canadians expressed a preference for an American style melting pot approach to immigration over the multicultural mosaic that has been officially promoted in Canada since the 1970s.

The survey also disclosed that Canadians generally are increasingly intolerant of interest group demands and that there is a relatively strong view that particularly ethnic, racial or religious minorities must make more efforts to adapt to Canada rather than insist upon a maintenance of difference, especially at federal expense.

Roughly similar proportions of visible minorities expressed the same sentiments. This poll would suggest that it is the prevalent opinion among the groups targeted to receive multiculturalism grants that such grants are divisive and not uniting.

As I mentioned, criticism of the status quo has been increasing from the policy's supposed beneficiaries. Jimmy Wong who emigrated from Vietnam in 1980 and is now a technician at a photo processing lab commented: "The government spends too much money on something that is not necessary. Canada has freedom and work for anyone who wants it and that is all newcomers need". Richmond magazine editor Anthony Choy

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agrees that government sanctioned segregation is no good for Canada.

What seems to be clear is that there is an erosion of support for multiculturalism by the citizens of Canada. This erosion of support for the multicultural approach, particularly given that minorities themselves concur, does nothing to promote harmony and unity in Canada because it does not recognize that all Canadians are equal.

Earlier I referred to the Citizens' Forum on Canada's Future. This royal commission is better known as the Spicer commission. Mr. Spicer's views were well enough respected to earn him the chair of the royal commission on Canada's future.

We should take a brief look at his views on the future of multiculturalism. Mr. Spicer clearly saw the need for integration. In 1987 he said: "Isn't the time coming to stop making a religion of mosaics altogether and to start fostering a national spirit we can all identify with? With constant intermarriage, for how many generations more must an English or Ukrainian Canadian revere his presumed roots?" Spicer went on to accuse the government of making a virtue of a weakness, a glory of a hindrance to nationhood. We pay people to have foreign roots.

Two years later, just before he was given the chair of the royal commission, he wrote an article which appeared in the *Montreal Gazette* stating that state funded multiculturalism encourages not Canadians but professional ethnics and that multiculturalism was an anthology of terrors: Balkanization, ethnic politicians siphoning off political protection money, ghetto mentalities, destabilization of Quebec leading to secession—look where we are today—reverse intolerance for Canadian culture and institutions and a devaluation of the very idea of a common nationality.

At first blush the armies of the politically correct would have us think that Mr. Spicer's views are extreme and unrepresentative. However, nothing could be further from the truth. I referred earlier to the 1991 Angus Reid study on multiculturalism in Canada. It is the most comprehensive and the most recent evaluation of Canadians' attitude toward multiculturalism. Its findings echo the comments made by Mr. Spicer.

In a section of the study on multiculturalism policy and the federal government in general, groups knew little of the federal government's policy on multiculturalism and most of those who claimed familiarity were, upon further probing, unable to provide substantive details of the policy. Further, the study dispels the myth that it is only the west where we find people opposed to multiculturalism spending. The report states clearly that there was a widespread feeling that the government should not be involved in multiculturalism especially in Toronto and Calgary and the notion that multiculturalism policy was ultimately

divisive was expressed clearly in Montreal, Toronto and Calgary.

(1335)

The study also evaluated the Canadian Race Relations Foundation and the Canadian Heritage Languages Institute, both of which are large components of the multicultural program.

Regarding race relations, respondents did not believe that it was the task of government to eliminate racism. They believed it should be handled within the community or one on one. Regarding the languages institute, respondents in Toronto, Winnipeg and Calgary expressed the view that ultimately the responsibility for preserving heritage languages resides at the family or the community level.

Importantly many participants noted that funds to any of the organizations should come from private not public funding sources. When people begin to criticize multicultural federal funding, the liberal left often trot out section 27 of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms to justify the continuous pouring of taxpayers dollars down the multicultural drain. Section 27 of the charter states: "This charter shall be interpreted in a manner consistent with the preservation and enhancement of the multicultural heritage of Canadians".

For the Liberal left any reference to the charter is meant to be an immediate conversation winner as it serves as their Bible. Any reference to it is as such deemed to be incontrovertible. However, in this instance section 27 will not save them. Peter Hogg, understood to be the leading constitutional expert, even by the liberal left, doubts the utility of this section, calling it a mere rhetorical flourish.

I must share the words of another Canadian author, Richard Ogmundson. He writes:

Times have changed and we have moved on, apparently in the most accidental fashion, to a new social policy called multiculturalism. My visceral understanding of this is that the old social contract, upon which I based my life, has been terminated. It has apparently been replaced with a new social contract that emphasizes "old world" cultural identifications. It would appear that the cultural ideal has become that of a hyphenated Canadian. Apparently, one is now supposedly to identify primarily as Aboriginal, French, British, Italian, Sikh or whatever, and only secondary as a Canadian. In this view, it would appear that there is no cultural space available for someone, like myself, who wants to be a Canadian. At best, this category is considered secondary, residual or anomalous. At worst, someone who wishes to identify as a Canadian is likely to be considered chauvinist, reactionary, racist, and bigoted.

My visceral reaction to this sequence of events is that I have been deprived of my primary cultural identification by the opportunists who run this country. In a way, one might consider the multiculturalism program to be a form of cultural genocide aimed at the destruction of a pan-Canadian identity.

I feel an acute sense of betrayal. I feel a sense of demotion. I feel that I have been told that, by virtue of my ethnic heritage, I'm not good enough to be a full-fledged member of Canadian society.

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Our vision of Canada should be committed to the goal of social and personal well-being that values individuality while emphasizing themes like family and community assumption of responsibility, problem solving and communicating these value sets to a means of better group life. However, at no time should the rights of a group supersede the rights of individuals unless the group happens to consist of a majority within Canada.

This discussion of multiculturalism serves as an example of how Bill C-53 really is a special interest funding bill. I have shown how the federal government's interpretations of multiculturalism support must come to an end. We can no longer spend money we do not have financing such a notion. The Angus Reid study from 1991 clearly showed that not only has the multiculturalism program failed but Canadians oppose it.

Bill C-53 gives to the Minister of Canadian Heritage the power to spend money on programs which fundamentally undermine the unity of this country. Canadians are tired of a status quo government. Canadians will not support or tolerate further special interest funding and they will not support the bill.

Hon. Sheila Finestone (Secretary of State (Multiculturalism) (Status of Women)): Madam Speaker, I am very pleased to join this discussion in the House today and to speak to Bill C-53, the Department of Canadian Heritage Act. The bill is designed to give legal status to the amalgamation of five predecessor organizations, the Secretary of State, the Department of Multiculturalism and Citizenship, the Department of Fitness and Amateur Sport, the parks departments of Canada, a component of Environment Canada, and the cultural broadcasting and heritage components of the Department of Communications.

(1340)

This profound reorganization reflects the government's commitment toward more efficient and effective government. Under the new arrangement one department is responsible for delivering a critical mandate. The Department of Canadian Heritage brings together many elements that define us as Canadians, as who we really are, a multifaceted, dynamic and diverse nation with a very rich cultural and natural heritage. Our geography and our culture are as diversified as one could possibly find. We should not be asking the question of who is a real Canadian. That is answered as a matter of citizenship. We must ask ourselves what are our Canadian values and how do we appreciate and communicate their importance to all Canadians.

I would say that those I have just been listening to have been communicating a tremendous degree of misinformation. I hope my remarks will put proper information in the hands of all Canadians.

The fact is that we have always been a multicultural, multilingual nation, from the many native communities and native peoples that existed here before the founding of our two nations, that is the British and the French who came here and later joined the aboriginal people and the Inuit. We were later joined by people from around the world to build a bilingual and multicultural Canada and that is our reality. This new department is responsible, and I will quote from the legislation, for "the promotion of a greater understanding of human rights, fundamental freedoms, and related values as well as multiculturalism".

Canada's multicultural nature is something we have already entrenched in section 27 of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. It is one of which all Canadians can be proud. No one has been asked to remove their roots. Everyone has been told they are welcome here in Canada and please bring their culture with them, not their ancient angry patterns.

We have codified our commitment to respect the diversity of this nation by unanimously passing the world's first multiculturalism act. By placing this policy, this program, this name, whatever we wish to call it, by placing multiculturalism within the context of the Department of Canadian Heritage we are ensuring that this is a policy that addresses the needs of all Canadians.

Everyone in the House, regardless of colour, race, language, creed or religion is a Canadian by right of birth or by right of choice if they hold a Canadian citizenship passport.

My vision of today's multiculturalism relates as a word to its policy, to its program, how it describes our reality. It is one that encompasses the full diversity of our people. It includes those whose families arrived from Europe many centuries ago as well as those who recently arrived from the four corners of the globe. Canada reflects the world for the world is here in the nature of our people and the citizenship that they hold.

The mandated program is to provide and promote a greater sense of intercultural and interracial understanding and that is not laissez-faireism. That is active understanding of who we are, how we came to be, and an appreciation of the uniqueness of this Canadian mosaic. That is what I would have liked to have heard from across the floor. It is most unfortunate that was not the language of the discourse.

We must all recognize that in order to achieve this goal of social cohesion, social understanding and acceptance, the government is only spending \$1 per year per Canadian. It is barely enough I believe to ensure social cohesion, social harmony and the great country that we are.

*Government Orders**[Translation]*

It is a broad but essential mandate, if we want to consolidate the elements needed to foster a sense of Canadian identity. The place of multiculturalism in this context shows the paramount importance of this policy in strengthening our national identity.

(1345)

A great deal has been said about the situations that caused deep disagreements within our society. The so-called break-up of the family, the greater visibility of our multicultural population, the prolonged recession from which we are only now emerging have all led us to ponder who we are and what we represent, even though the United Nations still rates our country as the best in the world.

The Department of Canadian Heritage was created to promote understanding of our diversity, active involvement in Canadian society and knowledge of our cultural and natural wealth. It carries out this mandate by implementing policies and programs designed to help resolve disagreements, clear up misunderstandings and make us proud of our personal and national identity.

[English]

The increasing diversity of our population is only one of the dramatic changes that we are facing. Efforts to deal with these demographic changes are occurring in the face of a number of destabilizing and worrisome dilemmas: world recession, structural changes in the economy, poverty, job losses and other global moves, youth alienation and the difficulty of achieving political consensus on major issues.

Our response to these challenges demands adjustment by and for our people, both as individuals and in their national institutions. Achieving progress can be a daunting task but a worthy challenge.

For example, since taking on the responsibility of Secretary of State for Multiculturalism and travelling across this land and speaking with the people, I have become aware as never before that nation building in a culturally diverse society is a formidable but necessary challenge. The importance of this task must not be underestimated because it involves reconciling cultural diversity with national goals, with national identity. It involves ensuring respect, understanding and appreciation for differences. It involves ensuring that the tapestry which we have woven together with its multicultural colours and its uneven surface is one to be appreciated and one to be admired, with the overwhelming need to ensure that national unity is understood as a common value of which we can be very proud, talking about a national unity, talking about a sense of pride.

I listened earlier to some of the remarks and I do not feel there is a sense of betrayal. I certainly do not feel like a fractionated or hyphenated or disembowelled individual who has to cut off my roots and sense of belonging in order to have a sense of pride and belonging in order to be seen as a Canadian with all the attributes I bring in that personality and in that persona.

I am just not a hyphenated Canadian. I am a Canadian who is proud of her cultural heritage. In Quebec I am a Montrealer. In Canada I am a Quebecer and around the world I am a Canadian. If anyone asks me it is with pride that I say I am a Canadian almost anywhere in this world including in my own city or province.

Let me make it quite clear that none of those identities is incompatible with the strong sense of national identity and pride. It is very much what I am. It is very much that which I am first and foremost, a proud daughter with Jewish roots. I am a mother. I am a grandmother. I share my care, my love and concern and can spread it equally, evenly and as need be. For me that is no conflict. For Canadians, I have spoken to all origins. Whether Italian, Greek, Hungarian, Romanian, from Sri Lanka, Indo-Canadians, whether they are Chinese or Chilean, Catholic, Protestant, Muslim or Jewish, this is not the issue.

(1350)

The issue is that there is a social contract in Canada that says we share together, learn together, appreciate what we have here and protect it. It is like a very tender young flower. It is a democracy that is messy sometimes but it is the finest thing in the world. We have every reason to be proud of our families, our roots, our heritage. It is through the family and through volunteerism and with participation with the state and the institutions and structures of the state that we can accomplish the kind of country we have all inherited, are inspired by and have a responsibility to protect.

That is why we work closely and in partnership with other levels of government and with key stakeholders in the community. By bringing together various institutions we work to assist them in becoming more responsive to the access needs of our people, to the sense of belonging, to the need for employment and housing, and respect in our health institutions and all aspects of our daily living tasks. By working as mainstream Canadians with newly emerging Canadians as well as others we help to build a Canada that is inclusive of all people.

Our partnership with organizations such as the Canadian Ethnocultural Council, the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police, the Federation of Mayors and Municipalities, the Conference Board of Canada, Multicultural Canada, the Canadian Advertising Foundation, the Asia-Pacific Foundation, the Canadian Association of Broadcasters and as well with the mayors of major cities we work and give our funds to these organi-

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zations in shared partnership as leverage so that we can promote a better understanding and destroy myths and stereotypes such as have been promoted from across this floor this morning.

We work with these partners to break down prejudice, misinformation, disinformation and to ensure fairness and equality for all people, to build understanding and create that sense of belonging.

[*Translation*]

Fortunately, Canada's experience in the last 20 years generally offers a positive viewpoint on multiculturalism issues, on bringing cultural communities together. What is needed to bridge the gap between new arrivals and the Canadian community receiving them is to build a society based on a consensus about what constitutes the common good for people with diverse interests, backgrounds, origins and beliefs; give everyone a role to play in the big issues; and identify peaceful solutions to potentially explosive problems.

In short, social peace is behind all the efforts we make through multiculturalism goals and strategies.

[*English*]

I have travelled across the country. I have listened sometimes to the misunderstanding but I have listened to the people and have heard what they have said about our diversity. I have heard about the economic advantage of a diverse population, advantages when we have such increases in foreign trade. We have also learned that when business is responsive to and reflective of its diversity it can be profitable as well.

The advertising council's colour your money study showed that by producing representative advertising companies such as the Bay, Zellers and McDonald's increased their revenues because people felt welcome. They felt they could be received behind the counter and were perceived as clients when the advertising was put out; they belonged as Canadians and would be served by Canadians.

[*Translation*]

This and other experiences have convinced me that the programs and policies under my responsibility are a great help in dealing with the problems facing us as a country with a very diverse population comprised of many different groups and peoples.

As you know, at least 46 different countries and ethnic communities are represented in my riding of Mount Royal, while Canada has over 100 ethnic communities.

(1355)

[*English*]

Frank Rutter, a foreign affairs writer for the Vancouver *Sun*, has described multiculturalism as sweeping the world and as trying to balance a multicultural heritage with a national soul.

The implications of not achieving that balance are very worrisome, if not horrific. We only have to look at what is happening in the world around us to see the results of not trying to reconcile different realities of diversity and ensuring a sense of unity, a sense of belonging and a sense of pride.

[*Translation*]

I stated the obvious because Canada must clearly approach the issue of cultural diversity with rigour, sensitivity and broad-mindedness or be willing to suffer the consequences. The approach adopted by our country in dealing with multiculturalism is an asset that has allowed us to avoid the ethnic tensions plaguing other countries.

[*English*]

Let us realize the real picture of whom we are today. Forty-two per cent of all Canadians have origins other than British and French. With respect to our people of colour, those statistics are often referred to in Statistics Canada reports as visible minorities in Canada. Nationally these were 6 per cent in 1986, 10 per cent by the year 2000. In our major cities, 17 per cent in 1986 and 30 per cent by the year 2000. However in Toronto alone there will be approximately 50 per cent non-English and non-French backgrounds with 30 per cent visible minorities. Other major Canadian cities are undergoing similar changes.

Therefore the increasing diversity of Canada has broad ranging implications. Given an increasingly multicultural reality, Canadian governments and institutions face a number of practical challenges.

Let me close this part of my remarks by saying that fostering a national sense of belonging does not mean asking people to cut off their roots. It does not mean asking mainstream Canadians to forget their origins. It means telling, asking, expecting, teaching, training and educating so that we have an appreciation of where we started, with aboriginal, multicultural, multilingual peoples, whom we added and how we have lived together in peace and understanding.

I would hope that as I continue talking about the Canadian mosaic people will learn and appreciate the role that we play for a dollar a year for each Canadian.

We have to talk about how we ensure and promote growth and understanding of our diversity while recognizing our common values. I believe we have to find and implement effective ways to eliminate discrimination, prejudice, racism and bigotry based on the colour of our skin, our religious beliefs or our cultural differences. We have to learn how to encourage individuals and institutions to make a commitment to work toward eliminating and erasing racism.

These are all programs and projects which we undertake jointly with community groups to ensure that people can get together to understand and know each other in a much more neighbourly way.

How to involve people in welcoming and facilitating the integration—

The Speaker: We will await the hon. member's words with great anticipation.

It being 2 p.m., pursuant to Standing Order 30(5), the House will now proceed to Statements by Members pursuant to Standing Order 31.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[English]

TOM MARTINEAU

Mr. Leonard Hopkins (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke): Mr. Speaker, yesterday in Bosnia, Warrant Officer Tom Martineau, who is serving in central Bosnia with the Lord Strathcona's Horse Battle Group, was injured during an exchange of fire between Bosnian government and Bosnian Serb forces.

Warrant Officer Martineau received a single gunshot wound to his left side while working at an observation post in the Bosnian Serb side of the confrontation line about eight kilometres east of Visoko. He was observing warring faction activity from a Cougar armoured vehicle when he was struck during an exchange of fire between the opposing sides. We are very proud of the useful work that our Canadian forces are doing on the international scene.

Warrant Officer Martineau is currently in the excellent care of Canadian forces medical personnel at Camp Visoko and is listed in stable condition.

I know that all members of the House of Commons here in Canada will want to join with me in extending our best wishes to Warrant Office Martineau and his family during this difficult time.

* * *

[Translation]

PARTY FUNDRAISING

Mr. Louis Plamondon (Richelieu): Mr. Speaker, we learned today that companies, banks and unions contributed over \$25 million to finance the national Liberal, Reform, Conservative and New Democratic parties. Big corporations contributed \$25

S. O. 31

million to ensure that their interests are well represented here in the House of Commons.

The Bloc Quebecois for its part received contributions only from the people and is accountable only to them.

For the sake of the openness and democratic values which guide us, I call on the political parties in Canada to be concerned above all with the people's interests and to refuse contributions from party sponsors. Members of Parliament ultimately owe their loyalty to the people and not to big corporations.

* * *

[English]

YOUNG OFFENDERS

Mr. Darrel Stinson (Okanagan—Shuswap): Mr. Speaker, in May I received an appeal from 16 of the high school staff at Lumby, B.C., for assistance in deterring criminal acts such as those committed against Rodney Bell, an Oyama who had his skull smashed by an axe wielding youth, or an RCMP officer who was crippled for life after he was intentionally struck by a vehicle driven by adolescents.

My constituents are asking what the government is going to do about the non-enforcement of our laws, particularly against young offenders.

In their own words the Liberals stated in their red ink book that "dealing with the growing incidence of violent crime will be a priority for a Liberal government".

While the people of Canada are calling for crime control this government instead has moved toward further regulation of guns owned by responsible citizens.

Specifically these teachers and staff of Lumby ask the Liberal government to consider caning as a viable option for legislation.

* * *

HOCKEY

Mr. David Iftody (Provencher): Mr. Speaker, the House passed Bill C-212 that recognized hockey and lacrosse as national sports. Hockey is a sport that unites Canadians regardless of region. Canadians have a special relationship with hockey and we are very disturbed over this strike.

I do not stand alone in the House when I say that the revenues and salaries of hockey players and owners are sufficient.

League revenues increased 22 per cent last year from \$549 million to \$700 million. Salaries increased by 19 per cent. Small markets like Winnipeg are losing money and jobs. Markets like that cannot sustain a strike.

Fifteen to eighteen hundred jobs are directly attributed to the Winnipeg Jets and over \$50 million is injected into the local economy of Winnipeg.

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Stop this madness. Lock yourselves in a room. Negotiate an agreement and save five small franchise teams in Canada. Do not destroy the livelihood of many ordinary Canadians who depend on sport for income.

Last, I encourage the players and owners to get back to the table, stop the lockout and give hockey back to ordinary Canadians.

* * *

ENDANGERED SPECIES

Mr. John Finlay (Oxford): Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Body Shop, the Canadian Nature Federation, and the Sierra Defence Fund for their national campaign which begins today to urge the federal government to enact legislation which will protect Canada's endangered species.

It will be important for all of us to pick up the call begun by these groups. In order for future generations to have a sustainable environment we must do everything within our power to protect species, both plant and animal, which are in danger of becoming extinct.

More and more people all over the world have begun to realize over the last few years just how fragile our environment is. I want to thank these groups for reminding us that the time to take action is now.

* * *

(1405)

GERMAN UNITY DAY

Mr. Rey D. Pagtakhan (Winnipeg North): Mr. Speaker, four years ago today saw the dawn of German unity, when the governments of east and west Germany forged one republic. Heralded by the fall of the Berlin wall, the coming together of the two halves of that nation hastened the end of the cold war.

The process was not easy. The political differences which separated the two halves were formidable. But the will to achieve a united nationhood and to act on it was stronger. Unity of effort is no less important than unity of purpose.

I call on my colleagues to join in today's celebration of German Unity Day. It marks the triumph of a people's freedom to live in a democracy and the end of a tragic part of German history.

May we find inspiration in the meaning of this day and pledge to uphold the ideals of a Canada united in vision, purpose and effort and thereby secure the strength, prosperity and freedom of our country.

[Translation]

IMMIGRATION

Mr. Osvaldo Nunez (Bourassa): Mr. Speaker, the consultations by the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration to set immigration and refugee policy are like this government's other consultations: while the people are being consulted, the real decisions are made by a small group chosen by the minister.

The minister's questionable strategy of openness clearly shows that he intends to keep the major stakeholders, namely the organizations which defend the interests of immigrants and refugees, away from the implementation of this policy.

How can the minister claim to really consult the people when the decisions are made by a chosen few? When will the government really act openly? Those are the real questions that the minister will have to answer sooner or later.

* * *

[English]

REGISTERED RETIREMENT SAVINGS PLAN

Mr. Werner Schmidt (Okanagan Centre): Mr. Speaker, every year through RRSPs many Canadians manage to put aside a small portion of their income for retirement.

This nest egg does not mean they are wealthy. But it does represent their hard work and gives them some assurance about their future. Today that nest egg is in jeopardy of being taxed because of a government which cannot find a better way to balance the budget.

Instead of encouraging Canadians to provide for themselves, taxation of RRSPs in effect says, do not earn, do not save, do not invest and do not plan for retirement.

To tax our RRSPs is to tax our future. It is a short-sighted solution that will provide for the migration of Canadians and their money out of this country.

On behalf of the constituents of Okanagan Centre I urge the government to listen to Canadians. They are tax weary and they are angry.

Today the debt of Canada stands at \$532.8 billion.

* * *

TRADE

Mr. Mac Harb (Ottawa Centre): Mr. Speaker, I stand today to congratulate a dedicated group of public servants who are striving for excellence. The Latin American and Caribbean Trade Division, Ambassador David Winfield and the staff in our Canadian Embassy in Mexico are creating Canadian jobs.

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I recently attended the opening of the first Canadian Business Centre abroad and I am proud of this smart initiative. This pilot project in Mexico provides Canadian businesses with a venue to showcase their products through exhibitions, trade shows, conferences and seminars. The centre offers short term office space, computer, secretarial and translation services.

The latest trade figures between Canada and Mexico are at an all time high. The total two-way trade for the first six months of 1994 is up 40 per cent over the same period for 1993 for a total of \$2.8 billion. This translates into 12,180 Canadian jobs annually.

[Translation]

Investing in foreign affairs and international trade is one of the best ways to create jobs and help Canada prosper.

* * *

[English]

AIDS AWARENESS WEEK

Mrs. Beryl Gaffney (Nepean): Mr. Speaker, yesterday 25 Canadian communities walked the fourth annual Walk for AIDS at the start of AIDS Awareness Week. In fact our own Minister of Health was walking for AIDS in the city of Montreal.

More than 1,000 people from the region in which I live took to the streets of downtown Ottawa, raising over \$150,000 for prevention and support services for local AIDS victims.

Throughout the week the Canadian AIDS memorial quilt will be on display at the Ottawa-Carleton regional headquarters. A benefit concert of traditional, contemporary and spiritual music by the Canadian Centennial Choir will be presented on Thursday night at St. Joseph's Church on Laurier Avenue. The week will culminate in a 7 p.m. vigil at RMO headquarters in remembrance of those who have lost their lives to AIDS.

(1410)

I offer my best wishes to those who have organized these events and I congratulate all those who have and will be participating in AIDS Awareness Week.

* * *

UNIVERSAL CHILDREN'S DAY

Mr. Andy Scott (Fredericton—York—Sunbury): Mr. Speaker, today Canada and countries around the world celebrate Universal Children's Day, a day designated by the UN to recognize the rights of children everywhere.

I pay tribute to Canada's children and highlight the many Third World children in need of assistance. I particularly point to PLAN International Canada, formerly Foster Parents Plan, a group dedicated to lifting children from poverty around the world.

To commemorate Universal Children's Day, PLAN today unveils an African children's toy exhibit at the Ontario Science Centre. These toys, made from recycled material by African children, demonstrate the challenges they face and the ingenuity they possess.

On behalf of the chair of PLAN's board of directors, a constituent of mine, I congratulate the some 611 foster parents of Fredericton—York—Sunbury for helping better the lives of roughly 677 children. There is no better time than today to encourage our constituents to support children everywhere.

* * *

[Translation]

FRANCOPHONE RIGHTS

Mr. Jean H. Leroux (Shefford): Mr. Speaker, first in Kingston and now in Longlac, in northern Ontario, francophones are being denied their rights as taxpayers and French speaking citizens.

The English majority trustees on the school board just blocked the construction of a combined French school and community centre. Francophones in Longlac have been demanding this high school for six years now. According to the daily newspaper *Le Droit*, and I quote: "The ill will of anglophones in Longlac towards their French speaking fellow citizens is blinding them". The chairman of the French section of the school board is equally blunt: "This is an anti-French vote".

Mr. Speaker, this is what one might call pulling a Kingston, and yet this government touts the success of its bilingualism policy.

* * *

[English]

REFORM PARTY

Mr. Ken Epp (Elk Island): Mr. Speaker, the Reform Party is giving Canadians a real voice in government. This evening we are going to experience the first ever, Canada-wide, live, nationally televised, interactive electronic town hall meeting.

It is true that technologically we are limited to communities receiving cable television and to people who have touch tone phones, but this is a most important genesis of an idea whose time has come. We are a democracy and it is time that our citizens are heard between elections as well as at elections.

At a time when we are being pressured into redefining Canada, the outcome of which will affect us all profoundly, I urge all members of the House, as I urge all Canadians, to invest the \$1 user pay fee to express their views on the subject of national unity. For French dial 1-900-451-4032. For English dial 1-900-451-4841.

*Oral Questions***WORLD HABITAT DAY**

Mrs. Georgette Sheridan (Saskatoon—Humboldt): Mr. Speaker, the United Nations has designated the first Monday in October as World Habitat Day.

World Habitat Day is marked through the efforts of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements. In this, the International Year of the Family, it is fitting that this year's theme for World Habitat Day is called "Home and the Family".

The objective of World Habitat Day is to focus special attention on shelter. The conditions under which we live affect our health, productivity and sense of well-being.

[*Translation*]

Home is not only a physical space; it is also a symbol of warmth, security and identity.

[*English*]

In other words, home is where the heart is. Canada is among the best housed nations in the world, thanks to organizations like CMHC. Not all are so fortunate however. Over one billion of the world's population are inadequately housed and over one hundred million are absolutely homeless.

We still have work to do here in Canada to ensure all men, women and children have decent shelter. Let us mark World Habitat Day by renewing our commitment to this cause.

* * *

SOCIAL POLICY

Hon. Audrey McLaughlin (Yukon): Mr. Speaker, this week the government will be bringing forward its long-awaited social policy reform paper. Certainly poverty is increasing in this country, not decreasing, and there needs to be real change in the way that we deal with these issues.

However, I would say that while we see lots of hype about welfare reforms, let us take a look at whose welfare really needs reform. Each year thousands of corporate companies get away with paying no income tax and receive millions of dollars in tax credits.

(1415)

There are no means or income tests for the corporate sector as there are for those on unemployment insurance or welfare.

In 1992, 7 per cent of tax revenues came from corporate income tax and 48 per cent came from personal income taxes.

Poverty is on the increase in this country and the Liberal government has decided to hit the middle class yet again through social policy reform while continuing to let the corporations off scot-free.

Take the Auditor General's recommendations. Taxing offshore profits is \$600 million and taxing private family trusts is another \$400 million.

* * *

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Bernie Collins (Souris—Moose Mountain): Mr. Speaker, climate change represents a real and growing threat to Canada's economy. It threatens our forestry, fishing and agricultural industries, worth over \$50 billion. The unabated growth in greenhouse gas emissions will lead to more frequent and severe weather events costing billions of dollars for all Canadians.

The government recognizes the nature of the threat and is committed to having an action program in place on greenhouse gas emissions by 1995. Furthermore, Canada is committed to table its plan. A draft report on options for such action will be before the Canadian public. Consultations are being held this week and next week and comments collected then will be incorporated into the report.

Once a credible program for stabilization is achieved the government will work with urban and provincial governments with the aim of reducing emissions. Climate change represents a tremendous opportunity for Canadians to propose creative and credible solutions. Our children's children are looking to us. Let us not let them down.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[*Translation*]

TRADE

Hon. Lucien Bouchard (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, last Thursday, a spokesperson for the Prime Minister's office said in a rather offhand way, and I quote: "The invitation to participate in the trade mission to China was addressed exclusively to the Premier of Quebec". The federal government would not let Mr. Parizeau be replaced by one of his ministers, and the same spokesperson for the Prime Minister even let Quebec know, somewhat contemptuously, that it was not as easy as ordering pizza.

I want to ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether her government would reconsider its decision and let Mr. Parizeau, who obviously has more pressing matters to attend to, send one of his ministers instead.

Hon. Sheila Copps (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Environment): Mr. Speaker, we assume the premier of Quebec can accept the invitation since he was elected by Quebecers on a promise of economic growth. He was invited to take part as premier like all the other premiers, and we are waiting for him to reply whether he will play on Team Canada.

Oral Questions

Hon. Lucien Bouchard (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, one wonders since when does the federal government have the right to set the agendas of provincial premiers?

I want to ask the Deputy Prime Minister, since Bob Rae may have to decline as well, what Team Canada will look like if neither Quebec nor Ontario are on the team?

Hon. Sheila Copps (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Environment): Mr. Speaker, the team Canada is sending to the Orient includes a number of outstanding members of the business community in Quebec, including Laurent Beaudoin and Guy Saint-Pierre, who both accepted the invitation. We are still waiting for the Premier of Quebec to decide that the invitation extended by the Prime Minister of Canada is important enough for him to take part as Premier.

Hon. Lucien Bouchard (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, how can the Prime Minister of Canada expect us to take his commitment to co-operate with the new Quebec government seriously, when at the first opportunity, his attitude is so uncompromising and so inflexible that he refuses to let Mr. Parizeau be replaced by one of his senior ministers?

Hon. Sheila Copps (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Environment): Mr. Speaker, I think the main question is that if the Premier of Quebec was elected on a promise of economic growth, is it important enough to him to play on Team Canada?

(1420)

I think none of the other Premiers were given an opportunity to be replaced, not the premier of Ontario nor the premier of Alberta nor the Premier of British Columbia, because we wanted a delegation at the first ministers' level. That is important, Mr. Speaker.

[*English*]

This effort by Team Canada is an effort at the prime ministerial level. We do not want substitutes because we want Team Canada to be represented by the first ministers across the country.

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[*Translation*]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mrs. Monique Guay (Laurentides): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of the Environment.

Last week, in reply to a question, the minister claimed that her department was involved in the preparation and monitoring of the operation to clean up sediments contaminated by PCBs in the St. Lawrence River, across from the city of Massena. This

operation has in fact been put on hold because of serious safety problems.

Will the minister confirm the direct involvement of her department in this extremely delicate operation, or is her department merely receiving and blindly approving plans made by American authorities?

Hon. Sheila Copps (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Environment): Mr. Speaker, last week, I personally contacted the Canadian government representative regarding this issue. Indeed, I was informed that the curtain is not working and that the operation has been delayed. The Canadian Minister of the Environment was on hand every day. I personally wrote to the U.S. EPA administrator to ensure that no operation would be undertaken in Massena without our approval.

Mrs. Monique Guay (Laurentides): Mr. Speaker, how can the minister claim that her department is fully involved in the clean-up operation when a memo provided by her department to SVP and dated September 23 indicates that no emergency plan, in case of a disaster, had yet been made public, this on the eve of the PCB clean-up?

[*English*]

Hon. Sheila Copps (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Environment): Mr. Speaker, the note from my ministry made it quite clear that the Canadian government was on site and that the curtain which was supposed to contain the sediment was not functioning. That is the reason the operation did not begin.

I personally contacted the administrator of the EP in the United States to advise her that the Canadian government was taking the very firm position that no dredging would go forth until we were satisfied that the technology was going to protect the environment and the health of Canadians.

* * *

SOCIAL POLICY

Mrs. Diane Ablonczy (Calgary North): Mr. Speaker, the well orchestrated leaks to the media from the ministry of human resources leaves little doubt as to the contents of the social policy discussion paper.

The Deputy Prime Minister says this social policy exercise will not go to reduce the deficit. Yet the finance minister says: "It does not take a genius to figure out that the government will have to slash spending to meet its deficit cutting targets".

Given that two-thirds of all spending after interest is on social programs, how does the government square these two statements?

Mr. Maurizio Bevilacqua (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Human Resources Development): Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for her question.

The hon. member has to understand that Canada's social security system dates back almost 40 years. There have been

Oral Questions

many changes in our system. I think this will give the hon. member an opportunity to debate fundamental issues.

One thing is certain however. The hon. member can rest assured that this government on this side of the House is not advocating the lion's bite as stated by the Reform Party to cut \$15 billion, taking away student programs, taking away seniors' programs, taking away all the programs Canadians have grown accustomed to.

Early on in the debate it was quite clear that the Reform Party only cares about who is paying. The Bloc Quebecois only cares about who controls. The only people who truly care about the quality of life of Canadians is the Liberal Party.

(1425)

Mrs. Diane Ablonczy (Calgary North): Mr. Speaker, members opposite lose no opportunity to distort what Reform says on social programs.

Reform's deficit elimination plan calls for reductions in transfers to provinces and now so does the government's social policy paper. For years Reformers have proposed restoring UI to its original role as a short term insurance support in case of job loss and now so does the government policy paper. For years Reformers have proposed a voucher system for distributing federal education dollars and now so does the government's policy paper.

I ask the minister this: When did the government stop reading its red book and start reading the Reform policy blue book?

Mr. Maurizio Bevilacqua (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Human Resources Development): Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member once again for her question. I want to clearly outline to her that we have not tabled the discussion paper yet. I think it is only a couple of days away. She can wait. The member can rest assured that there is only one measuring stick on this side of the House, the discussion paper. The implementation of the legislation thereafter will only be successful if it improves the quality of life for Canadians. That is what this government is all about.

Mrs. Diane Ablonczy (Calgary North): Mr. Speaker, I only wish that we could hear about these proposals here first instead of in the media. The government has obviously been reading the Reform policy book but it has been reading it backward. We recommend reductions to social spending only after there have been cuts in other areas, including reductions in subsidies to businesses, interest groups, crown corporations, government operations and Parliament itself.

Now that the government is proposing cuts how long will Canadians have to wait for cuts to MPs' pension plans?

Mr. Maurizio Bevilacqua (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Human Resources Development): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member has to understand that far too many of our children live in poverty, far too many of our students are having a hard time finding that very first important job, far too many of our workers are having problems with the transition from work to work. The social security review is about bringing positive change to the lives of Canadians and I am sure that the hon. member will participate in this historic debate.

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[Translation]

GENITAL MUTILATION

Mrs. Christiane Gagnon (Québec): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Deputy Prime Minister. During the Gynaecologists and Obstetricians Conference held in Montreal last week, the physicians confirmed they have on occasion treated young girls suffering from the after-effects of genital mutilations done right here in Canada.

These statements show that excisions and infibulations are more widespread than we would have thought. Is the Deputy Prime Minister still of the opinion that the current provisions of the Criminal Code are sufficient, as the Minister of Justice says?

Hon. Sheila Copps (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Environment): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Justice said in this House, and it is our opinion, that according to the Criminal Code, in Canada, to mutilate a person's genitalia is a criminal act. However, the Minister of Justice also agreed to make sure the Criminal Code was properly enforced in the case of genital mutilation and if not, he said he could take other actions. He will be presenting a report to this House on that issue.

In Canada, it is already a crime for anybody, including a physician, to perform an operation mutilating a girl's genitalia.

Mrs. Christiane Gagnon (Québec): Mr. Speaker, is the Deputy Prime Minister not of the opinion that the best way to put a stop to those inhuman practices is to criminalize them through specific clauses leaving no possible margin for doubt?

Hon. Sheila Copps (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Environment): There is no doubt possible. It is definitely against the law as it stands today. In Canada, it is a crime to carry out any mutilation of a woman's or a girl's genitalia. The minister has promised to make sure the Criminal Code is properly enforced. It is already a matter of fact that in Canada nobody has the right to mutilate women's genitalia.

Oral Questions

(1430)

*[English]***JUSTICE**

Miss Deborah Grey (Beaver River): Mr. Speaker, last week was a good week for intoxicated criminals. Thanks to the Supreme Court, drinking and driving may hold less serious consequences and extreme drunkenness is now a legitimate excuse for rape.

Does the Minister of Justice agree with these appalling decisions? If not, what does he plan to do about them?

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Solicitor General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member has raised a serious point. The decision has concerned many Canadians. I will bring her question to the attention of the Minister of Justice. I am sure he has this matter under review.

Miss Deborah Grey (Beaver River): Mr. Speaker, the House and the country are getting tired of reviews.

A sane society should move toward zero tolerance of drinking and driving, not away from it. A sane society puts rape victims ahead of rapists.

Will the minister urge upon his government a constitutional amendment or the use of the notwithstanding clause to ensure that when the rights of victims and the rights of criminals conflict that the rights of the victim will always prevail?

Mr. Russell MacLellan (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Justice is deeply troubled by the decision in the sexual assault case involving alcohol. He is looking into it, as is the department. The minister assures the House that the Department of Justice will come forward with its report on this very important situation.

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*[Translation]***RAILWAY TRANSPORTATION**

Mr. Paul Mercier (Blainville—Deux—Montagnes): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Transport. On September 22, Canadian Pacific put out a proposal to buy all of the CN rail network east of Winnipeg. The federal government responded on September 29 by setting up a parliamentary task force on the privatization of Canadian National.

Does the minister not think he was cavalier announcing the creation of such a task force just days before the federal-provincial conference of transport ministers, while the future of rail transport depends to a large extent on its connection with highway transport, which comes under provincial jurisdiction?

Hon. Douglas Young (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, first of all, I would like to point out to my hon. colleague that the task force in question is not a parliamentary one, but rather a group of government members who were asked to examine the possibility of marketing Canadian National activities across the country.

Naturally, if the government received a counter-proposal from CP, such a proposal would have for effect, if accepted, to privatize all railway operations in eastern Canada, east of Winnipeg. I think that we must make sure we are in a position to submit—not only to the government and to Parliament, but to all Canadians—any alternative contained in the unsolicited proposal from Canadian Pacific.

Mr. Paul Mercier (Blainville—Deux—Montagnes): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Transport again. Why did the minister not give directly to the Standing Committee on Transport, in which the opposition is represented, the mandate of reviewing the CN privatization plan, instead of assigning this responsibility to a special task force made up exclusively of Liberal members?

Hon. Douglas Young (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt that the last thing we would want to do, whether as a minister or government, would be to tell the Standing Committee on Transport what to do.

As my hon. colleague and my friends from the Reform Party know—they announced just last Friday that the committee would be holding hearings on airport transfer, on the air navigation system and on bilateral talks with the United States; this makes for a very busy schedule—nothing stops this parliamentary committee on transport from reorganizing its schedule to review the whole issue of how the railway system is going to operate in Canada. Nothing is stopping it from doing that.

* * *

*[English]***FISHERIES**

Mr. John Cummins (Delta): Mr. Speaker, another two million fish are missing from the Fraser River. That brings the total this year to well over three million sockeye.

(1435)

Will the minister allow his management of the west coast fishery to come under the scrutiny of a judicial inquiry, which can subpoena witnesses and take testimony under oath?

Hon. Brian Tobin (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member knows full well that the estimates of salmon provided to both Canada and the United States for our respective management of these fisheries is provided by the Pacific Salmon Commission. This is a bilateral commission

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which is jointly funded and jointly authorized by both countries and is independent of both countries.

He also knows full well that on Friday past the executive secretary of the Pacific Salmon Commission acknowledged the counting procedures of the commission and that the numbers which are provided to both countries are off this year. The commission announced its own internal review.

He should know as well that this morning this same commission held a press conference in Vancouver. The commission expressed its deep regret and offered to co-operate fully with the independent review already announced by this government last week.

Mr. John Cummins (Delta): Mr. Speaker, the review the minister refers to is not an independent review. It is a review by people with deep DFO connections. We had an in house inquiry after the disaster in 1992 and obviously it proved nothing.

We need an independent judicial inquiry which would consider not only the scientific evidence but also the human factor, the management of the resource. Why will the minister not commit to an independent judicial inquiry?

Hon. Brian Tobin (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans): Mr. Speaker, the minister has committed to an independent inquiry led by Dr. LeBlond of the University of British Columbia. Also included are Mr. Joe Scrimger, an acoustics expert from British Columbia; Dr. Dick Routledge from Simon Fraser University; Lee Alverson, a scientist from the United States; and the Hon. John Fraser, former Speaker of the House of Commons.

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[Translation]

RADIO BROADCASTING

Mrs. Suzanne Tremblay (Rimouski—Témiscouata): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Heritage. Last Friday, six radio stations across Quebec closed when the AM networks of Radio Mutuel and Télémedia merged, resulting in the sudden lay-off of over a hundred news employees.

Does the Minister of Heritage agree with the merger of Radio Mutuel and Télémedia, given that it concentrates the news media in Quebec's regions?

Hon. Michel Dupuy (Minister of Canadian Heritage): Mr. Speaker, we are never glad when jobs are lost anywhere. What I can say is that at last report, the CRTC received an application for this merger from Télémedia and Radio Mutuel. The case is before the CRTC, which will hold public hearings; under the circumstances, I think that it would be inappropriate for the Minister of Heritage to comment.

Mrs. Suzanne Tremblay (Rimouski—Témiscouata): Mr. Speaker, can the Minister of Heritage promise in this House to do what is necessary to have the CRTC hold these hearings as soon as possible so that we can get all the facts on this merger and its possible consequences?

Hon. Michel Dupuy (Minister of Canadian Heritage): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Heritage cannot dictate to an independent body like the CRTC, which is also a regulatory agency. It would be quite inappropriate for the Minister of Heritage to tell it what to do.

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[English]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Hon. Charles Caccia (Davenport): Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the Minister of the Environment on last week's announcement on the toxic substances policy in order to protect human health and the ecosystem.

When will the minister put into effect the important measures she announced regarding pesticides? How long will it take before the overall policy is fully implemented?

Hon. Sheila Copps (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Environment): Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his question. I know he has particular interest in toxins that are killing wildlife and endangering human health. That is the reason we have moved with the toxics framework.

We have asked for a 60-day period for public comment. We hope to receive those comments by the end of November with the intention of introducing implementing legislation in the early spring.

* * *

(1440)

GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURES

Mr. Stephen Harper (Calgary West): Mr. Speaker, in one year we have come full circle. Last week a Liberal government made a payment to the Government of Quebec for additional referendum costs and in justifying its decision based it on the honour and truthfulness of Brian Mulroney. My question is for the President of the Queen's Privy Council and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs.

Apparently it was the practice of the previous government to commit millions of dollars on the basis of verbal agreements. If that is what the government is saying, will the minister admit that is not appropriate? In the future will cabinet ministers only make these commitments with full and written documentation and with formal cabinet authorization?

Hon. Sheila Copps (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Environment): Mr. Speaker, we were simply following a

statement made by the hon. member in question when he stated on September 29: "The federal government is certainly morally obligated to fulfil its agreement".

Mr. Stephen Harper (Calgary West): Mr. Speaker, the minister should read the rest of the quote. If government members cannot justify this decision, the Reform Party is certainly not going to do it for them.

How can the government justify the inconsistency of paying \$34.5 million to the Government of Quebec on the basis of a vague verbal conversation some two years ago when it refuses the right of due process through the courts to Canadian companies that have written contracts with the government to develop terminals 1 and 2 at Pearson airport?

Hon. Douglas Young (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, it is quite a simple matter.

The hon. member is taking the position of his transport critic who said: "There is nothing wrong with the Pearson deal". That is what the member of the Reform Party who represents their position on transportation matters said: "There is nothing wrong with the Pearson deal". Anybody over there who believes that will never understand anything I tell them about the Pearson deal.

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[Translation]

DEVELOPMENT OF FRANCOPHONE COMMUNITY

Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval): Mr. Speaker, at the Acadian World Congress, the heritage minister announced that the Cabinet had just approved an overall policy on the development of francophone and Acadian communities. However, what was announced is nothing more than the minister's usual commitment to fulfil his own obligations. Unfortunately, the minister did not put in place a real comprehensive policy for developing the francophone community.

While the heritage minister is wasting time on the merits of his action plan, francophones' rights continue to be flouted. How does he account for the systematic obstruction of Ontario francophones' educational rights as is the case in Kingston and Longlac?

Hon. Michel Dupuy (Minister of Canadian Heritage): Mr. Speaker, first of all, the heritage minister is not stalling anything. The previous government, a Conservative government, had commitments under the Official Languages Act that it never honoured. So how could a government that respects minorities and takes all necessary steps to enforce the law be accused of stalling? If that is what you accuse it of, I do not understand your language at all.

Oral Questions

Of course, some provincial governments do not behave like the federal government. They have responsibilities to those they must serve, particularly in the field of education. I am very interested to hear the Bloc ask a question in which it wants the federal government to get involved in the field of education. Now I have heard it all!

Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval): Mr. Speaker, does the minister not agree that the tremendous difficulties experienced by francophone communities throughout Canada clearly show that the federal government's actions have not done anything so far to protect them?

(1445)

Hon. Michel Dupuy (Minister of Canadian Heritage): Mr. Speaker, we heard an opinion which is not necessarily shared by the communities I serve. But I see that my colleague wants to portray himself as a great soul and I would be happy to give him food for thought by quoting my grandfather, a native of Sainte-Flore: "God, in His wisdom, made the soul invisible so that no one would know who has a soul and who does not".

The Speaker: I will not enter this debate.

* * *

[English]

1-900 NUMBERS

Mr. Randy White (Fraser Valley West): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister criticized us for using 1-900 numbers to solicit the opinions of Canadian people. I heard that a little while ago.

Now what I find is that the Liberals are paying for 1-900 numbers on the backs of the taxpayers and they do not even know it. An internal document from a federal institution, of course, shows mostly unauthorized long distance charges of 111 hours in one month alone in this institution.

My question is for the Deputy Prime Minister. Since some of the calls were to 1-900 numbers, is it not a double standard for the Liberals, for the whole government, to criticize Canadian citizens for taking part in an exercise in democracy when their own people are dialling the latest fishing news and the latest dating services to 1-900 numbers at taxpayers' expense?

The Speaker: The Chair is having some difficulty. I presume the question is directed to a department of the government. If that is the case, I will permit the Deputy Prime Minister to answer if she so wishes.

Hon. Sheila Copps (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Environment): Mr. Speaker, I understand from the implication of the member's question that employees of the Government of Canada have been wrongfully dialling 1-900 numbers that we are supposed to be paying for.

Oral Questions

Obviously as a taxpayer and as a representative of the Government of Canada I do not want our employees dialling numbers for which the public is paying, quite clearly.

Mr. Randy White (Fraser Valley West): Mr. Speaker, that is refreshing. Nevertheless it is being done. This example of spending money is so typical of the government. It would be funny if it were not so pathetic.

The case I am referring to is taking place in a federal prison. I might as well ask the Solicitor General about it. Is it government policy to allow only prison officials to phone same sex dating services at taxpayers' expense or are the prisoners also allowed to reach out and touch someone?

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Solicitor General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, I will check to see if the prison officials monitor all those outgoing calls.

In the meantime, perhaps on another occasion the hon. member can tell me why he is so fascinated by this subject.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

(1450)

The Speaker: This is getting to be a very touchy day.

* * *

SMALL BUSINESSES

Ms. Paddy Torsney (Burlington): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Secretary of State for International Financial Institutions.

In the red book the Liberal Party addressed the need for small businesses to have access to capital to allow entrepreneurs to make the transition from innovative ideas to actual production.

In Burlington small businesses create many jobs and have the potential to create even more if they could get financing.

What initiatives will the government take to create access to capital for small businesses?

Mr. David Walker (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the hon. member for Burlington for that question because I think it concerns every member of the House as to the future of small business.

We have undertaken several initiatives in the last nine months which will become public in the next few weeks. Everyone will see the hard work that has been done. For example, the Department of Industry and the Department of Finance have been working through a private business community group to come up with a number of suggestions for financing. The House of Commons committee on industry will have its report out in the next few weeks on the future of financing those small businesses.

The government has been working very hard to convince the banks to make their lending procedures with small businesses more transparent. We expect to see a new code of conduct become public.

* * *

[*Translation*]

DEFENCE INDUSTRY CONVERSION

Mr. Claude Bachand (Saint-Jean): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Deputy Prime Minister. Following the closure of military bases, Maritime provinces lost 3,000 jobs but received \$20 million from the federal government to diversify their economy.

In Quebec, 1,000 jobs were lost through the same cuts, but the province only received \$200,000 to cope with the situation. How can the Deputy Prime Minister explain such unfair treatment to Quebec, considering the compensation made to Maritime provinces following the closure of military bases?

[*English*]

Hon. David Michael Collenette (Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member does not have his facts straight. There was an equitable distribution of mitigation moneys.

Leading up to the budget earlier this year on February 22, I said that there would be no mitigating measures the likes of Summerside and GST centres replacing lost economic activity at military bases. There were some moneys available, about \$50-odd million that defence made available on a regional basis to the ministers concerned: western diversification, FORD-Q, minister of industry for Ontario and the minister of government services for the maritimes. There was an equitable distribution of those moneys.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Claude Bachand (Saint-Jean): Mr. Speaker, on top of setting up the Peacekeeping Training Centre in Cornwallis, the federal government allocated \$7.5 million to diversify the economy of that community. Why such a double standard, since the government still refuses to compensate the city of Saint-Jean for the closure of its military college?

[*English*]

Hon. David Michael Collenette (Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs): Mr. Speaker, again the hon. member has his facts wrong because my colleague, the minister of intergovernmental services, negotiated an agreement with the former Government of Quebec dealing with the transition of the Collège militaire royal de Saint-Jean. It is a provincial institution whereby certain language instruction and military activity would continue. That costs money. I believe that most of the money we allocated to FORD-Q under the

Oral Questions

auspices of the mitigation program went for that particular settlement.

Even saying that, I should remind the hon. member that the share of military spending in Quebec actually increased from 19 per cent to 22 per cent as a result of the budget because everywhere else in the country was hit even worse.

* * *

DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL DEFENCE

Mr. Jack Frazer (Saanich—Gulf Islands): Mr. Speaker, responding last week to questions about mismanagement in the defence department, the parliamentary secretary stated there had been no wrongdoing.

Almost every page of the Lagueux report details conflict of interest, contracting irregularities and questionable business practices. People call my office to say that the \$327,000 is far lower than the correct figure for the DM's renovations and following on from Lagueux, other reports have reached the same conclusions of chronic problems.

Again I ask, will the Minister of National Defence commission an independent public inquiry into his department to clear up this matter and enable him to resolve any problems it reveals?

Hon. David Michael Collenette (Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs): Mr. Speaker, my colleague, the parliamentary secretary, when he gave his response last week in my absence was absolutely correct in that he believed the question was pertaining to allegations of wrongdoing by senior officials in the department such as the deputy minister or assistant deputy minister.

(1455)

I want to assure the House that no such wrongdoing has been proven in any way and I have full confidence in the senior officials and my deputy minister.

Second, on the question of the renovations of the deputy minister's office this is really an Order Paper question that is separate from the larger question that the hon. member—

An hon. member: Oh, oh.

Mr. Collenette: If he would listen, it is separate from the larger question that the hon. member has a right to be concerned about. There were irregularities in contracting. There was harassment. There were management practices that were wrong.

The Lagueux report, an arm's length report from a senior ADM in the department, uncovered these wrongdoings. In one case there was a criminal prosecution. In the other there were dismissals.

The hon. member has all the facts. I think he now has read the Lagueux report. In no way does this implicate any of the senior officials in the department. The fact is in a big organization like defence or any corporate organization there are going to be problems. When we see that the problem is there, where we find irregularities, we deal with them. Some people were dismissed, one person was charged and subsequently convicted.

Mr. Jack Frazer (Saanich—Gulf Islands): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the minister for his forthright response and I want to go on record as saying I am not accusing anyone of anything, nor have I ever meant to do that.

I would like to say that a confidential memo dated April 13, 1994 and released under the access to information reveals that officials in the defence department informed the minister that the media might be asking questions about the deputy minister's office renovations.

If his own staff felt compelled to warn him about media interest, will the minister not admit that there was at least a perceived problem with this matter and move to resolve it by getting on with an independent inquiry?

Hon. David Michael Collenette (Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs): Mr. Speaker, one of the problems we have in government is that there are from time to time disgruntled employees. In this case there was a leak from the department about certain renovations.

Those renovations to the executive suite of defence I believe can be fully justified. I will make all the documents available to the hon. member. I will table them in the House.

We have to keep some perspective here. It is not cheap to run a government. It requires that administrative measures be taken. In this case the expenses were fully justifiable.

* * *

TRANSPORT

Mrs. Dianne Brushett (Cumberland—Colchester): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Transport.

I know that all Canadians were shocked last week by the tragic sinking of the ferry *Estonia* and that they join me in extending our deepest sympathy to the families of those so tragically affected.

Could the minister give Canadians his assurance that our Canadian ferries are safe?

Mr. Joe Fontana (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I am sure that this is not a laughing matter.

I join with my colleague who has just expressed our deep sorrow and regret at the tragedy of the *Estonia* and therefore the question is quite appropriate.

Routine Proceedings

I want to take this opportunity to convey to Canadians that our passenger ferries are absolutely safe. Since 1987 Canadian passenger ferries have been subjected to independent audits to ensure that safe operating procedures are followed.

I must also add that Canadian standards for inspection of ferries exceed those of international communities so that the Canadian public and this House can be assured that our ferries are safe.

Mr. Vic Althouse (Mackenzie): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of Transport and the Prime Minister, my question is for the Deputy Prime Minister.

The Speaker: I am sure that the hon. member inadvertently made his first statement. We do not refer to the presence or absence of anyone in the House. Would he please put his question.

Mr. Althouse: Mr. Speaker, the Western Grain Transportation Act was presented by a past Liberal government as a new balance between the needs for railway revenues and the legislative guarantees to farmers in the historic crow benefit.

The Minister of Transport has made cuts to the farmers' side of the equation and is proposing to stop the payments altogether.

What is the government proposing for the various lucrative formula induced revenues that the railways receive under that same legislation?

(1500)

Mr. Lyle Vanclief (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Agriculture and Agri-food): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member again does not have his facts straight. The minister has not made any statement as to the future of the WGTA. He has made a statement and has put in process the opportunity for all of the participants in the grain industry to take part in a debate in the consultation process regarding the future of that type of support to Canadian agriculture.

* * *

FIREARMS

Mr. Jack Ramsay (Crowfoot): Mr. Speaker, in a judgment rendered on April 28, Judge Demetrick of the Alberta Provincial Court declared that portions of the definition of a firearm contained in the Criminal Code are so convoluted as to be legal fiction and twice removed from reality.

I ask the Minister of Justice to comment on Judge Demetrick's declaration and to tell us how such convoluted legislation can have any impact upon the criminal use of firearms.

Mr. Russell MacLellan (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Justice, when going across the country this summer to speak to groups concerned about these proposed changes to the firearm laws, assured the people with whom he spoke that he would undertake a review of what was Bill C-17 and the regulations to assure that the language and the intent of those laws and regulations were pertinent and of value. If they were not, if they were convoluted, he gave the assurance that he would either change the wording or remove the regulations altogether.

* * *

[Translation]

TAXATION

Mr. Yves Rocheleau (Trois-Rivières): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Industry.

The Conseil du patronat du Québec is once again asking the Minister of Finance not to eliminate, next January 1, the federal tax deduction for money paid by Quebec businesses to finance health care with Quebec taxes on payroll.

Will the Minister of Finance urge his colleague to maintain this tax deduction, in compliance with the views expressed by the Minister of Finance himself, when he was in opposition?

Mr. David Walker (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, all provinces are discussing this issue with the government and a decision will be made before January 1.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE**HEALTH**

Hon. Roger Simmons (Burin—St. George's): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the second report of the Standing Committee on Health.

Pursuant to Standing Orders 108(1) and 108(2), following consideration of the evidence received and the conclusion reached by the subcommittee, we have studied the process by which order in council appointments are reviewed by the health committee.

The committee has agreed that any such review should preferably involve referred nominations rather than appointments and should focus on the qualifications and competence of the individual, having taken into consideration any regional aspects important to Canadians.

(1505)

The committee agreed to recommend that the House consider referring the issues raised in this report to the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Speaker, I want to point out that although the Bloc Québécois members sitting on the committee approved the report, they disagreed with the following statement: "It would be appropriate not to take into account the political allegiance of those appointed".

[*English*]

PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

Mr. Peter Milliken (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present the 37th report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs regarding the membership in standing committees. If the House gives its consent I intend to move concurrence in this report later this day.

* * *

CANADA POST CORPORATION ACT

Mr. Andrew Telegdi (Waterloo) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-278, an act to amend the Canada Post Corporation Act.

He said: Mr. Speaker, the purpose of the bill is to provide for the establishment of a system allowing persons who do not wish to receive direct mail advertising or mailing of printed matter without further address than householder, box holder, occupant or resident to notify Canada Post Corporation accordingly; and that Canada Post respect the wishes of the home owner if they do not wish to receive junk mail, and that Canada Post comply accordingly.

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

* * *

HOLIDAYS ACT

Mr. Alex Shepherd (Durham) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-279, an act respecting flag day.

He said: Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to introduce today a private member's bill, the subject of which is to recognize the third Monday of February of each year as flag day, a national holiday.

Previous attempts at recognizing this holiday have referred to the day as heritage day. However I believe flag day more appropriately reflects a symbol which unites us as a nation. This is a flag that is recognized throughout the world. The fact that 1995 will represent the 30th anniversary of our flag is one more

Routine Proceedings

reason to take this occasion to reflect on our traditions and customs.

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

* * *

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

Mr. Peter Milliken (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, I think you would find consent of the House to dispense with reading of the 37th report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs.

In that same spirit of consent I move, seconded by the hon. member for Cumberland—Colchester, that the 37th report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs presented to the House earlier this day be concurred in.

(Motion agreed to.)

* * *

PETITIONS

ETHANOL

Mr. Rex Crawford (Kent): Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to present this petition on behalf of my constituents who call upon the government to support the ethanol industry, and thus support farmers and rural communities in the dramatic creation of long term jobs.

This petition is in addition to the 10,000 names my colleagues and I have already presented on ethanol earlier this year.

(1510)

ABORTION

Mr. Rex Crawford (Kent): Mr. Speaker, I have two other petitions, pursuant to Standing Order 36, signed by 76 of my constituents who call upon the government to amend the Criminal Code to extend protection to the unborn child.

NATIONAL UNITY

Mrs. Beryl Gaffney (Nepean): Mr. Speaker, I have two petitions to present. The first one has 200 signatures. These people comment on the fact that the hon. Leader of the Opposition has travelled to other parts of the world to promote the separation of Quebec from Canada.

These petitioners call upon Parliament to inform the Leader of the Opposition that he is not supporting the majority view of the residents of Ottawa Carleton when he is travelling to promote the separation of Quebec from Canada.

HAZARDOUS PRODUCTS ACT

Mrs. Beryl Gaffney (Nepean): Mr. Speaker, my second petition is with regard to tobacco and the Hazardous Products Act. The petitioners believe that tobacco is a hazardous product

Government Orders

and that the exemption that it presently has under the Hazardous Products Act should be removed.

POSTAGE STAMPS

Ms. Maria Minna (Beaches—Woodbine): Mr. Speaker, I would like to present a petition from 1,455 people across Canada with respect to the post office.

They cite that the Government of Canada has allowed that the Canadian postage stamp to be printed outside of Canada by another country. As petitioners they request that Parliament enact legislation against the Canadian postage stamp being printed outside of Canada.

ASSISTED SUICIDE

Mr. Svend J. Robinson (Burnaby—Kingsway): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present a petition which is signed by hundreds of residents from across Canada.

[*Translation*]

This includes Quebec residents. The petitioners point out to the House that the Criminal Code, as it now reads, deprives terminally ill patients and people suffering from irreversible and debilitating disease of the right to choose freely and voluntarily to end their life with the help of a doctor. Consequently, they urge Parliament to amend the Criminal Code to ensure that all Canadians have the right to die with dignity.

[*English*]

Mr. Lee Morrison (Swift Current—Maple Creek—Assiniboia): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36, I have the honour to present a petition signed by residents of the town of Maple Creek in my constituency.

They petition Parliament to ensure that the present provisions of the Criminal Code of Canada prohibiting assisted suicide are enforced vigorously and that Parliament make no changes in the law which would sanction or allow the aiding or abetting of suicide or active or passive euthanasia.

This is in addition to several petitions on this subject signed by hundreds of my constituents which I have previously submitted.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Mr. Ed Harper (Simcoe Centre): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36 it is my pleasure to present two petitions on behalf of the constituents of Simcoe Centre today.

The first petition requests that the Government of Canada not amend the Human Rights Act to include the phrase sexual orientation. The petitioners are concerned about including the undefined phrase sexual orientation in the Canadian Human Rights Act.

Refusing to define the statement leaves interpretation open to the courts, a very dangerous precedent to set.

EUTHANASIA

Mr. Ed Harper (Simcoe Centre): Mr. Speaker, I wish to present a second petition on behalf of the constituents of Simcoe Centre on the subject of euthanasia.

The petitioners request that current laws regarding active euthanasia be enforced.

* * *

[*Translation*]

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

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

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): Shall the questions be allowed to stand?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

CANADIAN HERITAGE

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-53, an act to establish the Department of Canadian Heritage and to amend and repeal certain other acts, be read the second time and referred to a committee; and of the amendment.

Hon. Sheila Finestone (Secretary of State (Multiculturalism) (Status of Women)): Mr. Speaker, I was addressing the challenges that were before us as a society to erase racism, to ensure social cohesion and to also assure that there would be shared responsibility between different levels of government, between citizens and industry and the private sector to enable Canadians to live in peace and harmony with respect and understanding.

(1515)

The questions I had been addressing, as members have heard, include those about how to address the special problems faced by disadvantaged minorities, by immigrant women, by women of colour, by youth caught between two cultures, by dislocated seniors, by those who look different from the majority, by those seeking medical assistance who face language and cultural barriers and how to ensure fairness and equity of access and equivalent accreditation of skills and educational undertakings learned in other places but brought to bear, to enrich and to enable our country to grow and develop.

Last, how do we marginalize those groups which would actively promote hatred against others. In that regard, I would like to warn members of the House and the public of the activities of the Nationalist Party in the promotion of European Heritage Week. This group is clearly racist in its intent, white

supremist, and we must not support the activities that they are undertaking.

Do not be fooled by fancy posters. Look at the group behind. They have become very sophisticated in their approach. I particularly want to thank Mayor Rowlands of Toronto for bringing this matter to my attention.

These are the important questions that together we want to answer at all levels of government and institutions. I believe those institutions that we have put in place are there to protect our democracy, which I pointed out earlier is very fragile. With the non-governmental organizations and our community-based volunteer groups, we can make a difference.

After nearly a year on this job, I have to report that it works. I have travelled to hear and to listen. The framework that brings together the wide-ranging concepts of our society associated with heritage are in place, for example, our cultural policy, our official languages policy, the policy on multiculturalism, the physical properties of national parks, the importance of human rights, charter challenges, volunteerism, sports and a number of others.

Despite the fact that Canadians have diverse backgrounds and origins, they are united by a shared sense of values and an attachment to Canada which we have built together, in English and in French, as well as with respect for the heritage, language and customs of our Canadian citizens.

It is also apparent that Canada's increasingly diverse population provides a unique resource, a resource base actually for successful development and expansion of our economy on domestic and international levels. We all know that business is international today, that business is multicultural today.

We have found in Canada people from all languages, cultures and religions who understand the culture of business around the world. They could help us develop and expand our economy at the domestic and international level.

What this implies is that we will fully use those cultural languages and skills and the knowledge that people have, and the fullest potential of everyone who comes to this country, recognize the personal contacts and the means that people have to open doors to business, to new markets, to new products and new services.

If we have the collective will to use the potential of all our citizens, and in a sense of fairness and equity for the individual and in an undertaking in the best interests of all Canadians, I believe we will move forward with a great sense of prosperity and understanding.

Government Orders

To close off, I want to talk for one moment about this. Canada, in its very multicultural mosaic, has a set of laws that are unique in this world. They have been coalesced under the proper kind of umbrella for their added protection. We wish to all share in the development of the experience that we have had here, in the way we have the machinery of government in place and that is to be shared with the rest of the world.

We have been asked to do that. Australia has just copied us. We have been asked to go elsewhere where things are even more sensitive. Here at home I want people to recognize that we have built a constructive model with enormous potential to ensure the future success of our society but we should always keep in mind the aphorism "if you're in the business of shining shoes, your shoes had better shine". Our programs need constant upkeep, tender loving care and appreciation by the people in the House and the people in the country.

(1520)

We must not undervalue the civilizing influence of our multicultural policies. They may be more lasting than many of our great monuments. These policies are about the quality of life, about the power of humanizing nations, about people living together with hope and a sense of understanding, respect and appreciation for the future with a sense of belonging.

Canadians must be ever more vigilant. While those who promote hatred and bigotry use even more sophisticated technology and high tech, we must redouble our efforts in promoting a truly just, inclusive and representative society. We cannot afford to do less. Giving us this right in the Department of Canadian Heritage under Bill C-53 is a status that I believe is important. Canadians will learn to treasure the great resource we have in all our cultural diversity and give it respect and understanding.

Mr. Dick Harris (Prince George—Bulkley Valley): Mr. Speaker, I listened with great interest to the member's statements. I have a couple of comments and questions I would like to ask.

In this great country one of the real freedoms we have for people who immigrate to Canada from other countries is the freedom to preserve their cultural heritage and cultural traditions. One of the questions we are asked by Canadians as we talk to them about multiculturalism is: Why does the federal government feel it is necessary to provide taxpayers' money to these groups in order for them to pursue their cultural heritage?

Some comment that if a particular ethnic group felt so strongly about preserving their cultural heritage they do not need federal taxpayers' money to do so. It is provided in the freedoms that they enjoy in this country.

Government Orders

I would like to ask the member what specifically is the government's justification for providing taxpayers' money to these cultural groups in order for them to preserve their cultural heritage?

I have another question or perhaps a comment. I am sure I heard the member earlier say that when she was in Quebec she was a Quebecer and when she was in Canada she was a Canadian.

Mrs. Finestone: I did not say that.

Mr. Harris: I would like to ask the hon. member if in fact she did say that and if she did not would she refer back to that portion of her speech because I thought I had a question for her?

Mrs. Finestone: Mr. Speaker, the end result of whatever it was that I said—I would have to look at the "blues" because I do not have everything written down—is the fact that I said I am a proud Canadian everywhere and anywhere and that is what I am.

With respect to the freedoms that the member spoke about, with respect to the importance of the federal government lending a hand to groups across this land, particularly new Canadians, Canadians who have arrived from countries where they have suffered terror, trauma, torture and lack of understanding of the role of the police when they arrive here because they have lived in a police state, I would say to the member that as a government, as a people and as human beings it is important for us to help them understand the structure of our society to enable them to integrate into this society.

I have not noticed that without some help major groups have volunteered so quickly to go in and help them. I would also like to point out that if the member is from an immigrant group—and I know from his riding he has had requests and received and given grants for immigrant and visible minority women—I wonder if he would believe that those visible minority women have triple discriminations, have a difficult time adapting to our society and have some skill re-learning to do while at the same time helping their children get settled.

As the member well knows, this country is not famous and businesses have not been famous and are just learning to hire people who are of colour as one of the equality measures as well as on their competence and ability to do the job. We have not recognized skills that are learned outside of this country. We have accredited to them the equivalences of what they have learned elsewhere. Now you do not want to give money to those kinds of groups, the visible minority groups who have come to him, the Abbotsford youth commission that has come to you, the native friendship centres that need money, the anti-racist and anti-hate education councils. These are the groups you would like to deprive of doing work both at the public, the volunteer, and at the institutional level. Well I do not agree with your perspective.

(1525)

The Deputy Speaker: Before I continue the period of questions and comments I would like to remind everyone to direct their comments through the Chair.

There are occasions, and maybe in most instances, when you could exchange comments very cordially. I know you all debate very well and are very respectful of one another but there are times when it is awfully critical to go through the Chair. I think it is a good practice for all of us when intervening to direct our comments through the Chair.

With the few moments left in questions and comments, the hon. member for Elk Island.

Mr. Ken Epp (Elk Island): Mr. Speaker, I listened with real interest to the speech. I am very interested in the direction the government is taking Canada with respect to equality of our citizens.

Over and over when I have been speaking to groups I ring a chord of agreement when I say we need in government policy to remove totally any reference to gender, colour, race, or to culture because only then can we treat people equally.

I have an example of racial and gender discrimination in my riding in the person of a young man who in applying for an RCMP position for which he was qualified in every way was disqualified because he happened to be white and he was male. That is sexual discrimination. That is racial discrimination. I do not care how you cut it.

The direction we are taking where we name certain races, certain colours, and female gender as having special privileges is perpetuating the kind of apartheid that brought South Africa down. We need to remove that. That will be the healthy direction.

I would really be interested in the minister's comments on that.

Mrs. Finestone: Mr. Speaker, you were in this House when we spent a great deal of time studying section 15 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. That was such an important section that we delayed the application of section 15 for three years. It came into effect April 15, 1985.

We do not have time to undertake an extensive examination of why section 15, the non-discrimination section of the charter and the right to affirmative action given equal competence and equal skills is of fundamental value in this country because it is equal to the question of fairness, access, respect and appreciation for differences.

I would suggest, if I may, that the "Equality for All" report be given to my hon. colleague. I am sure he would like to read it and understand why it is not discrimination and is only in the sense of the best action, not only in pay equity but employment equity, that one would want to move forward anyone who has com-

petence regardless of colour, regardless of language, and it is antithetical to what South Africa did.

It is too bad that this member and the member sitting in front of him did not have the opportunity to read the report that could have enlightened some very biased disinformation that was given this morning.

[Translation]

Mrs. Christiane Gagnon (Québec): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to participate in the debate on Bill C-53. This legislation, described as a mere technicality, provides an ideal opportunity to explain Quebec's perspective to our fellow Canadians.

As you know, the Bloc Québécois has the mandate to protect Quebec's interests at the federal level. Those interests are largely dependent on the development of Quebec's own cultural life as well as on its exclusive control over it. This is what Mr. René Arpin, chairman of the advisory group on Quebec's cultural policy, said at the hearings of the standing commission on culture, in June 1992.

(1530)

He said that "Quebec's distinct character and sound management of priorities require that the province have complete control over its cultural choices". Mr. Arpin added that "the federal government must completely withdraw from the cultural sector, regardless of Quebec's constitutional future".

Around the same time, the then Quebec minister of Cultural Affairs, Mrs. Frulla-Hébert, who can certainly not be labelled a sovereignist, said: "When it comes to programs, the federal government does little or no consulting". Genuine consultation is practically non-existent, and, when it does occur, it is often at Quebec's request. When, as often happens, it is faced with a *fait accompli*, Quebec has to state its real needs after the fact".

Since Bill C-53 mainly concerns federal activities in the cultural sphere, I will discuss certain aspects of federal encroachment in this area and, more specifically, the causes of this intrusion, how it is expressed in the bill, and its harmful impact on Quebec's development as an autonomous State.

Federalism or the invasion of Quebec: the origin of Quebec's problems lies in the very nature of the federal system. In fact, Quebec is considered to be just another province, one of ten, which is a denial of reality. Federalism means a central government that must reconcile the usually divergent interests of various regions and cultures.

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Because the Canadian government, in its infinite wisdom, decided that some day we should have a Canadian identity, it blithely ignored the situation in Quebec. Now this situation is quite different from Canada's. Quebecers are not concerned about their identity. Studies keep reminding us that Quebec's identity is alive and well, thank you very much. Canada's existential problems do not concern Quebecers.

Quebecers worry more about their economic and cultural development. However, since English Canada is seeking its elusive identity, Quebecers will have to contribute financially to this quest for the Holy Grail. This, without any decision-making power, since the power is shared among representatives of the ten provinces. That is one of the ways in which the federal system has an impact on Quebec.

Another side of federalism we cannot ignore is the negative consequences of the federal government's tremendous spending powers. These spending powers were gradually granted to the Canadian government by the courts which were, and still are, dominated by the legal profession from English Canada. However, as constitutional expert Gérard Beaudoin has pointed out, the courts are uneasy about with this power.

After analysing the jurisprudence in this area, Beaudoin noted that judges often issue formal warnings to the effect that spending powers should not be legislated in an area under provincial jurisdiction. He wrote that it was clear that abuse of spending powers confused the issue of government responsibilities in a federation and could upset a sometimes fragile balance.

The message is clear. Spending powers which initially were to be exercised only in exceptional circumstances are now used, at the drop of a hat to intrude in areas under provincial jurisdiction. Professor Beaudoin also quoted Professor Jean Beetz, former Justice of the Supreme Court, and we found his comments very revealing. The former Justice wondered about the financial power of federal institutions. Despite ineffectual warnings in the jurisprudence, a new kind of legislation had been created that allowed the federal government to influence provincial jurisdiction by dispensing its largesse as it saw fit.

The minister's powers, duties and functions under this legislation mostly concern matters of provincial jurisdiction. I am referring to the arts; the status of the artist; cultural heritage and industries; the conservation, exportation and importation of cultural property; and, to a lesser extent, amateur sport.

(1535)

The federal government will be investing more than a billion dollars a year in Quebec on culture only, and we contend that this legislation is a form of back door intervention and an

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encroachment on provincial jurisdiction. We strongly denounce such federal schemes in Quebec.

As I said earlier, Quebec officials have been asking for years for the exclusion of the federal government in the area of culture and the transfer of all powers to Quebec. Yet, section 4 of Bill C-53 would give Heritage Canada full power in the area of Canadian cultural development. Subsection (2) lists the areas of jurisdiction, and I will give you some which worry us: the arts, including cultural aspects of the status of the artist; cultural heritage and industries, including performing arts, visual and audio-visual arts, publishing, sound recording, film, video and literature; the formulation of cultural policy as it relates to foreign investment; the conservation, exportation and importation of cultural property. This is not just encroachment, this is a full-scale invasion.

The predatory attitude of the federal government illustrates very well the impossible Canadian duality. On one side, English Canada is seeking a national cultural umbrella, hoping it will bring about a Canadian identity—a national obsession—and hence a Canadian culture. On the other side is Quebec, where identity and culture are alive, dynamic and strictly our own.

Quebec does not need federal intervention. On the contrary, to ensure that Quebec culture continues to blossom, we must be free from federal intrusion. We must be given the money spent in Quebec by the central government to use as we choose and according to priorities that we would set ourselves to meet our needs.

There are at the present time an astounding number of overlaps and duplications between the cultural institutions and programs of Quebec and Canada. Here are some: the arts councils, the state television networks, the archives, the national libraries. Why not save millions for the taxpayers by eliminating these duplications and giving Quebec sole responsibility in an area so vital for its future as a nation?

Culture is what drives society. In a publication entitled *Le Québec dans un monde nouveau*, the present Quebec Premier said it in these words: "Our culture is the blend of our common history and heritage, of our common values and institutions. Our life as a community, our solidarity and collective vision are based on our culture". He then added: "Culture is the expression of a feeling of belonging to a community, it is the very fibre of our people. It is incarnated in our way of life, our way of thinking and creating. Within the particular North American context, Quebec culture must continually assert itself, promote creation expressing its originality, and seek enrichment by assimilating contributions from outside its borders. These are the requirements necessary to our vitality and survival".

Within such a context, it is easy to see how different the Quebec culture is from the Canadian experience. We must

promote the development of our culture, but not within a framework imposed by a government representing the other group.

This was the conclusion reached by two well-known Quebecers who followed one another as Quebec Minister for Communications and Cultural Affairs. In 1992, Mr. Jean-Paul L'Allier and Mr. Denis Vaugeois wrote: "Political subordination and economic inferiority can only breed an atrophied and diminished cultural life. It can be artificially sustained for a certain period of time as is the case in Canada and Quebec. But money is not enough. Inspiration is needed. We must be able to rely on our own resources. True development cannot come from outside".

It is imperative for the federal government to withdraw from Quebec culture and to compensate the Quebec government accordingly.

Multiculturalism is another area under the jurisdiction of the Minister of Canadian Heritage. Here again, Quebec's specificity is not being respected.

(1540)

There is in Quebec a consensus on how to deal with our fellow citizens from outside Quebec. The position adopted 20 years ago and systematically maintained since then is based on integration and respect. Quebec society favours the full involvement of all its members, whether they were born here or elsewhere. However, in order to meet this goal, integration into Quebec society is emphasized. We expect new immigrants to learn the national language, French, and to familiarize themselves with our traditions. This position does not imply in any way that racism or discrimination in any form is tolerated. On the contrary, Quebec society makes it a point to respect differences and individual rights.

Yet, respecting differences is not the same as officially promoting and institutionalizing these differences, as the Canadian multiculturalism policy calls for. Quebec has chosen to integrate its new members into Quebec society rather than the opposite. There is a major and, in my opinion, irreconcilable difference.

This is another area in which the central government flouts Quebec policy. The federal government legislates, creates programs and spends considerable amounts to promote the opposite approach. While, in our opinion, respect for individual rights clearly comes under provincial jurisdiction, the federal government continues to encroach on Quebec jurisdiction. We denounce and will always denounce this situation. That is another fine example of federalism's benefits.

Before closing, I will point out another insidious aspect of this bill, namely the Canadian heritage minister's duty to promote and develop English-speaking minorities. No one needs a history lesson to know that only Quebec has an English-speaking minority.

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Quebec anglophones are the best-treated linguistic minority in Canada, a fact that some of them even recognize. Representatives of French-speaking groups from outside Quebec would be easily satisfied with the status enjoyed by English-speaking Quebecers. Of course, I am not saying that there is no room for improvement. However, Quebec treats its minority with a very open mind.

It is in that context that we question the federal government's intentions in this area. In pursuing the objective of promoting the development of that so-called minority, does the government intend to legislate against Quebec's policies, even though these policies are very generous? Since federal legislation takes precedence over provincial legislation, Quebec's language policy could thus be subverted.

Does the government intend to spend large amounts to promote English in Quebec? Does it intend to give anglophones social and cultural facilities that are out of proportion to this linguistic minority's share of the population?

Let me reassure you that neither I nor my colleagues in the Bloc Québécois nor the government in power in Quebec have any intention of reducing in any way the advantages that our English-speaking fellow citizens enjoy. On the contrary, the Constitution of a sovereign Quebec would confirm the rights and advantages that the English community enjoys now. That is public knowledge.

However, I am concerned about what the federal government actually intends to do in Quebec. The government has no obligation to consult the provincial government and would probably feel no obligation to do so, as history shows. These issues are too important to give the central government complete power in this area in Quebec without saying a word.

Another issue raised by the bill is equal treatment for French- and English-speaking minorities. How can we ensure that francophone minorities will benefit fairly from federal largesse? How can we ensure that they will be able to catch up with Quebec's anglophone minority to some extent? Bill C-53 remains silent on this fundamental aspect of the treatment of minorities in Canada.

Quebec knows what to do; it knows what to do for its culture and for its minority. The central government should restrict itself to its own field of jurisdiction. Perhaps that is what good government means!

(1545)

Mr. Patrick Gagnon (Parliamentary Secretary to Solicitor General): Mr. Speaker, I wish first to inveigh against such a lampoonist speech! What it described is very far from the reality of the federal contribution, which is extremely generous in Quebec, to the promotion of the French Canadian culture across the country and around the world.

Tell me something: how is it that Telefilm Canada, which comes under this department, subsidized Mr. Falardeau's latest film, *Octobre*, with the participation of the NFB as well?

I wonder if there is another country in the Western hemisphere that would subsidize a film produced, written and directed by a separatist, a fellow who is bent on breaking up his country. Do you know of any other country that would do the same thing, a country with the will to finance such a project? Name one.

Tell me something else: did the hon. member know that over 40 per cent of the National Film Board's budget goes to Quebec productions, to productions in French?

I would also like to know this: on the subject of the federal contribution, we could also mention the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. I learned recently that the CBC produces more hours of original programming than France does for its own programming, its own culture. In a country with 6 million francophones and a total population that is half that of France, the Canadian government spends more than France on this. And then, some say this is a ploy on the part of the federal government. Some people have the nerve to talk about interference. When you look at the figures though, they speak for themselves: the federal government is the one promoting the Quebec culture and I think that many creative artists recognize this.

Finally, I understand what the Bloc Québécois is driving at, but let us not forget that opinions are divided in Quebec. You have producers, directors and people who would readily admit it. As a matter of fact, we saw in certain documents last year that the involvement of the federal government should be maintained because it is generally more responsive to the aspirations and legitimate financial needs of our producers in Quebec.

I am prepared to take questions from the opposition, Mr. Speaker.

Mrs. Gagnon (Quebec): Mr. Speaker, given the questions asked by the hon. member for Bonaventure—Îles-de-la-Madeleine, it seems like he did not understand the points I was making.

Earlier this afternoon, in my speech, I talked about the federal government's involvement in what should be provincial jurisdictions. What we want in Quebec is to manage our own money and to decide what we want to do with regard to promotion in Quebec, outside Quebec and throughout the world.

For the federal government to implement institutions is one thing, but to decide what to do in the province of Quebec is quite another thing.

As a matter of fact, I sit on the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage where many questions will be raised. We have met with artists' associations which are complaining about the decisions made by the government and the federal institutions, because these decisions do not completely allow the

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government of Quebec to maintain its own institutions and jurisdictions.

I can see that the hon. member for Bonaventure—Îles-de-la-Madeleine did not understand a thing I said. We do not want to hear about how many millions were invested; we want to decide, by ourselves, how to spend that money.

I think I have answered the questions put by the hon. member for Bonaventure—Îles-de-la-Madeleine.

Mr. Gagnon (Bonaventure—Îles-de-la-Madeleine): Mr. Speaker, I was just saying that 40 per cent of the National Film Board's productions in Montreal are French productions. So, if I understand the opposition's logic, if Quebec were to separate tomorrow, funding would fall to 22 to 25 per cent. Quebec would be the loser in this situation and that is what the opposition does not seem to understand.

(1550)

Where will the people on the other side get the money to organize trips and trade shows? Let us not forget that a lot of money comes from federal grants. I was just talking about the Monument national, Les Grands Ballets Canadiens, Radio-Canada and Telefilm Canada. The Canadian government has never questioned the work of our artists from Quebec.

As I was saying earlier, the hon. member does not want to admit to this 40 per cent, to the fact that Quebec receives more than its share of funding for its cultural institutions. She cannot give me an example of a film like Mr. Falardeau's *Octobre*, a film about the FLQ that was funded by Telefilm Canada and by the National Film Board. I challenge you to give me an example from another country. Do you know of any film about the Corsicans or the Bretons that was funded by the government of France?

Mrs. Gagnon (Québec): I can see that the hon. member for Bonaventure—Îles-de-la-Madeleine still has not understood the meaning of my intervention. The federal government invested in the movie *Octobre* because that is where the money is. If Quebec had had the money, then Quebec would have been asked to fund this type of production.

I am sorry, but I have to say that this bill will just aggravate the problems related to Quebec's cultural identity.

I am also aware that these funds come from the money we give the federal government to manage our country, which means that Quebec pays for these federal grants. We would like to see how we could manage our own programs. Of course, it would look bad if the federal government did not give anything to our producers and artists from Quebec. Nevertheless, it is an historic event. We could have a debate about the October Crisis here in

this House, show you the movie, show you how some Quebecers were treated and how Mr. Trudeau sent in the army. This crisis—

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please. This debate generates a lot of passion, which is good, but the Chair would appreciate it if hon. members showed more respect to those who express their views.

Mrs. Gagnon: Mr. Speaker, I was saying that the purpose of this bill is to promote, with our own money, a single vision which melts Quebec's culture into a multiculturalism program which presents problems for Quebec and which will also present problems for English Canada.

In fact, there is no consensus regarding this multiculturalism program. We should have a debate on the objectives of such a program. We want newcomers to adopt Quebec's culture, to learn French and to respect our institutions and customs. Indeed, it is one thing to know these institutions and customs but quite another to respect them.

This is what we mean when we say that we want to manage our own programs. We want to have control over the programs and the money used to promote the distinct character of our society. We speak French and we want to promote our own culture.

Mr. Patrick Gagnon (Parliamentary Secretary to Solicitor General): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure and a privilege to speak on Bill C-53, An Act to establish the Department of Canadian Heritage. I believe the best way to use the time at our disposal is to review the programs and responsibilities which fall under the jurisdiction of this new department.

First, I want to point out that the Department of Canadian Heritage has actually been in existence for over a year. Since its inception, which goes back to the general government reorganization of June 1993, officials of that department have discreetly but confidently succeeded in strengthening the links between the various and excellent programs which fall under its scope. This "growth stage" has been exciting and enriching. The fact is that it is not over yet.

(1555)

There is still a lot of interesting work and progress to accomplish before the Department of Canadian Heritage is fully recognized and plays its important role among other federal departments. Obviously, the tabling of this bill was a major step in that direction, as will its second reading.

[English]

I have just alluded to the range of programs within Canadian Heritage. I want to elaborate upon the department's composition and the scope of its activities. Before I begin let me add a caveat. Because of time constraints, my review of Canadian Heritage program areas cannot be all-inclusive. Nonetheless I am confident that the members present will find this description illuminating.

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Undoubtedly, one of the most visible programs administered by Canadian Heritage is Parks Canada, one of the department's three principal sectors. Many Canadians, and for that matter many visitors to Canada, have been fortunate enough to experience the splendour and richness of the country's system of national parks, national historic sites and historic canals.

A steward of these unmatched examples of our national and cultural heritage, Parks Canada is charged with the protection and interpretation on behalf of all Canadians. Given the nature of its mandate, Parks Canada is primarily a regional organization. It has strong and respected presence in every region of this country, including the Gaspé Peninsula, contributing significantly to the local economies of communities all across Canada directly through expenditures on its own operations and indirectly through the tourism and economic benefits generated as a result of those activities.

[*Translation*]

The second major departmental component is centered around the Canadian identity and the contribution of all citizens. Without question, it represents one of the largest series of responsibilities and incentives throughout the government. It includes programs promoting the official languages, excellence in amateur sports, human rights, the welfare of aboriginal communities living in large urban areas, the development of our cultural diversity, and finally, the full contribution of all citizens, including recent immigrants, to our society. In brief, these programs are of interest to each and every one of us, since they deal with what it means to "be Canadian".

We live in an era marked by major social and economic change. No one can deny that. In this context, initiatives undertaken by this departmental component are considered even more important. In fact, by promoting and increasing our sense of community and identity, these programs can truly help us to understand today's goals and to prepare for tomorrow's challenges.

[*English*]

The purview of the third major departmental component can broadly be described as encompassing cultural development and heritage. The responsibility of this sector extends to the arts, broadcasting and heritage conservation programs as well as the cultural industries pertaining to film, video, sound recording and book publishing.

In an age of unparalleled technological advancement where adaptability to change has become a prerequisite for success and where globalization of markets presents both potential for growth and new competitive challenges, Canada's creators, artists and producers are looking to government to provide leadership in formulating the legislation and policies that will allow them to compete and thrive.

To cite but two examples it means taking action to ensure that creators are justly compensated for the use of their works. It means fashioning a policy framework that will ensure a place for Canadian content and cultural products on the information highway of the future.

In general, it means ensuring that Canadians continue to see themselves reflected in a strong and vibrant culture.

[*Translation*]

I have briefly described the department, the activities of which are far-reaching and of significant importance to all Canadians. Although these programs may seem disparate at first, a slightly deeper examination would dispel these doubts. I hope I have managed to demonstrate, to some extent, that the various components of this new department have much in common, that, given their purposes, they complete each other and generate a kind of synergy that truly makes it more than the sum of its parts.

(1600)

[*English*]

I look forward to the enactment of the Department of Canadian Heritage Act. That step cannot fail to have beneficial and enduring effects in enhancing our sense of Canadian identity and participation in society, in furthering our cultural development and ensuring the continue appreciation and protection of our priceless array of natural and cultural heritage resources.

Mrs. Jan Brown (Calgary Southeast): Mr. Speaker, I would like the hon. member to explain a couple of things emanating from his speech.

He talked about the department being "successful in cementing relationships in this reorganization". If that was exemplified by the previous exchange between the hon. member and the member for Quebec Est then I would have to question the validity of that comment. He might wish to expand on that point.

The member also went on to give a lengthy list of all of the departments and all of the responsibilities of Canadian heritage, but he glossed over one point: the well-being of native peoples. I would like him to explain how and why he believes that Canadian heritage is indeed addressing this point. Our aboriginal people really do constitute involuntary citizens of Canada. They were never asked their opinions on the French or British regimes nor on Confederation and what really constituted their disenfranchisement.

I would like the hon. member to please give some thoughtful reasoned debate to the question of the well-being of native peoples. I would also like an explanation on the first comment he made regarding the successful cementing of relationships in the reorganization of his department.

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Mr. Gagnon: Mr. Speaker, I would like to inform the hon. member that we also have a department for Indian and northern affairs. We have a most capable minister with a budget who tries to address the varying issues that touch upon aboriginal communities.

I can speak for my area where the Ministry of Indian and Northern Affairs promotes various school programs for youngsters trying to lead very interesting lives as full partners in Canadian society. We may have to make a distinction however because when it comes to cultural affairs there is probably more that can be done in trying to enhance aboriginal culture.

In my speech I was speaking in terms of aboriginals in urban areas such as Toronto, Montreal and elsewhere. There is much to be done in trying to give them the opportunity to express who they are and their culture to fellow Canadians.

On the second point the hon. member quite correctly pointed out there are various views and opinions in terms of the role of the federal government in Quebec. As members know the Bloc Québécois may have the majority of seats on the opposition side but it does not have the majority of votes in the province of Quebec. We are talking of only between 44 and 48 per cent.

We should also take these things into account. We do not speak for all Quebecers. I have tried to inform the hon. member that the federal government has been a most productive and viable force in my home province of Quebec in terms of encouraging cultural development.

An hon. member: And everywhere else.

Mr. Gagnon: And everywhere else. It is important to note that the federal government has invested heavily in French culture to a point that our investments in CBC productions are far superior to what the French government invests in its own TV broadcasts. That is astonishing.

Forty per cent of the productions by the National Film Board are French Canadian. Regrettably, the hon. Bloc member is saying that Quebec wants it all for itself. However it would have to settle for 25 per cent if it opted for independence and right now it is getting 40 per cent.

(1605)

What I am trying to tell the two hon. ladies is that the federal government is doing its part in promoting arts and culture in Quebec and across Canada and it is doing a fantastic job.

Mrs. Brown (Calgary Southeast): I rise on a point of order, Mr. Speaker. This is a small point but it has occurred time and time again that we are not referred to in this House all of the time as hon. members and that is what we are. We are not hon. ladies, girls or anything else. We are hon. members.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): While it is not a point of order, I think it is a point that has been made and should be taken as such and rightfully so. In the most respectful parliamentary fashion we refer to one another as hon. members.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Suzanne Tremblay (Rimouski—Témiscouata): Mr. Speaker, I think my colleague likes very much to listen to himself talk. He talks and talks and talks. I also like to talk, but at least I do not deny it. What is important here is that as much as I recognize the member's expertise in some of these areas, I have to say that he is talking through his hat with regard to Canadian heritage. The CBC costs us a fortune. It costs us 65 per cent of the \$1.5 billion spent, and it is watched by only 13 per cent of English Canadians. This is not a good price-quality ratio. There is too much money paid to too many people for nothing. It is simply too expensive.

I would like to know what information the hon. member has on that. I am a bit tired, and so are Canadians, of hearing that we are the greatest country in the world. That is all very nice, but 20 per cent of our children live in poverty, the unemployment rate is at 25 per cent and we have a debt that grows larger by the second. When will the government stop saying that we are such a great country and start doing something to really make Canada a great place to live? Do you not think that our country is going bankrupt?

Mr. Gagnon (Bonaventure—Îles-de-la-Madeleine): Mr. Speaker, if I had been asked to comment on the country's economic situation, I would say that the hon. member for Rimouski—Témiscouata is right. Much remains to be done. I think that together, united and strong, we stand the best chance of putting this country on the road to economic recovery.

However, and I am nevertheless mindful of what was said by the hon. member and by my department, and I am referring to the department I represent here today. The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation has done a lot for culture in Quebec and for the culture of the francophone minorities outside Quebec. Thanks to the CBC, people know what this country is about. I do not know the exact ratings, but I do not think anyone can deny that Canadian productions are worthwhile. I think we have made some very good films with producers from Quebec and from English Canada. We have promoted the expression of Quebec culture, and I think this is largely thanks to the federal government, which gave Quebecers a chance to express themselves and say who they are, to Canada and to the whole world.

I think the Government of Canada is to be commended for having invested so much in Quebec, and what probably bothers the opposition is the fact that more and more performing artists and producers are aware of the positive role played by this department, and especially by the Government of Canada, in

promoting French Canadian and Quebec culture throughout the world.

[English]

Mr. John Duncan (North Island—Powell River): Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to participate in the debate on Bill C-53.

The debate we just listened to reminds me very much of the failure of federal spending. It is no different on job creation from what it is on cultural matters. If federal spending created jobs, every Canadian would have two. If federal spending helped on some of these cultural matters, people would not be voting by turning off their television sets when it comes to a lot of the programming on CBC.

(1610)

Bill C-53 is one multifaceted attempt to right every perceived wrong in the government's quest for political correctness. It is a continuation of hyphenated Canadians and funding of special interest groups which in the final analysis has hardly promoted unity and has only been a drain on the public purse.

Nowhere in Bill C-53 can I detect any change in this litany of throwing money at something we are desperately trying to understand. It seems that government thinks it can buy peace and unity by entrenching more rights and latitude for special interest groups. When are we going to become Canadians rather than a mishmash of individuals with a particular axe to grind?

While I am on that topic of special interest groups, it might not be as bad if more members of the special interest groups were beneficiaries. Too often a few greedy, self-serving individuals who head up the leadership of these groups are the main recipients.

I am told that one individual who is paid a \$60,000 a year salary to head one of these groups, a person in their thirties is nearly a millionaire. Is this where the funding for some of these groups is going: membership at the Rideau Club, first class air travel, cottages in the Gatineau?

Bill C-53 will not correct this injustice but will only entrench it further. One has to simply take a cursory look at the 1994-95 estimates for Canadian heritage. Every conceivable special interest group is on the payroll. What is the effectiveness of these programs? Is there demonstrable success to parallel their mandates? Are they accountable or merely sinkholes of largesse? My Reform colleagues will chronicle the misplacement of funding in this debate.

I would now like to turn to an element of responsibility of the Department of Canadian Heritage as contained in Bill C-53,

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specifically Canada's Metis. The department mandate states that the programs for Metis are designed to help the Metis define and participate in the resolution of the social, cultural, political and economic issues affecting their lives in Canadian society. A common feature of the program is that projects are community based and are initiated and managed by aboriginal people.

I can count some \$40 million directed at those programs. Is it being used on what is intended? Is it accountable? One does not have to do much research before one's antennae beam on specific examples where accountability is questionable. I refer to the Metis nation of Saskatchewan.

Last March and April headlines in regional Saskatchewan and national newspapers screamed out headlines of mismanagement of funds, accounting anomalies and refusal by Metis leaders to co-operate with audits. At one point over \$1 million was unaccountable. No one questioned the legality of the Metis in this circumstance; they did question accountability and proper management of funds.

It seems in government quests to keep everyone happy, we make the cheques and never ask another question. When someone stumbles over some anomaly regarding procedures, we get the whitewash. The bureaucrats and some antsy national Metis council officials get on the damage control mode. This is not good enough. Bill C-53 does not improve on it. What the cloud of uncertainty over the Metis Society of Saskatchewan did was create a splinter group of concerned Metis citizens. It seems they too felt that those Metis leaders handling the funds at the local level did not have the capacity to do it and it reflected badly on the members. Bill C-53 does not address this; it entrenches further mismanagement.

(1615)

In preparation for this debate, my office called a few departmental people, research officers appointed to and in these debates, and naturally talked to others interested in this subject matter. Is it not interesting that I still do not have a bottom line on funding through Heritage Canada to the Metis. I really do not think Bill C-53 will contribute to enlightening the House any further on this issue.

Other newspaper headlines suggest that Metis leaders are ignorant of public trust, that funding provided through Heritage Canada for programs and activities of Metis groups, often for worthy undertakings, may not be trickling down from the Metis leaders in charge of disbursing funds. It is simply not good enough to concentrate control of funds with the leadership. It would be better to have these funds administered by a council or committee made up of all strata within the Metis society.

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The very thing I speak of is what prompted the RCMP investigation of the handling of funds by the Metis Nation of Saskatchewan. I ask how window dressing the plethora of multiculturalism undertakings into the department of heritage will solve this disbursement and accountability of funding for Metis societies.

Bill C-53 merely complies with political correctness and assures a supply of government funds to be doled out by sometimes incompetent individuals.

I would be remiss if I did not touch on one other aspect of funding that should trouble us greatly. What Bill C-53 manages to accomplish is to again ensure continued funding for the industry that has been created around the Metis societies. Make no mistake about it, this is an industry unto itself, secret, paranoid and accountable to no one.

There was an instance this last spring in the midst of investigation into the Metis nation of Saskatchewan that funding cheques were still being issued to the same individuals under investigation, so-called representing a specific Metis society. What kind of power and control do these individuals in this industry have on this government? Instead of codifying more programs, which in the Saskatchewan Metis experience have caused disunity, not harmony, we should be drafting accountability guidelines for these bureaucrats handing out the largesse and establishing disbursement guidelines for these Metis bodies.

I am not breaking any new trails here. I have asked a series of questions of the minister of heritage, the Prime Minister and the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development regarding the Metis and aboriginal funding. I have attempted to enlighten this administration about who is really getting rich. With the current method, rank and file Metis are not the recipients. Bill C-53 will ensure it is business as usual.

Mr. Jim Sinclair, president of the Native Council of Canada, in testimony before the Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs stated in April of this year that he would welcome his books being audited by the Auditor General, not the Secretary of State now Heritage Canada. There has to be an arm's length relationship when it comes to the auditing function. Again Bill C-53 ensures that Heritage Canada will continue to audit itself. I call it vertically integrated bureaucratic control. It should be eliminated by the government.

(1620)

The federal interlocutor for Canada's Metis, the Minister of Natural Resources, is another participant in the process. She indicated that the federal government is prepared to assume 50 per cent of the cost of establishing and maintaining a registry of the people of the Metis nation.

We had a census in 1991. Why would the federal government want to encourage further racial divisiveness by committing to a

racially based census? Surely such an undertaking is another instance of the potential for more misunderstanding of the government's uncontrollable urge to create special rights for various groups within our society. Does anyone know how to say no?

At the same time that the federal interlocutor is committing to this census, the Metis leadership is proposing a national legislative assembly, a capital in Batoche, a flag, an anthem, an emblem, Metis and Canadian citizenship and Metis law making authority. Does the minister want to encourage all this by providing funding for an as yet undefined census based on racial characteristics where the proponent has a vested interest in inflating the membership qualifications as much as possible? What is the federal interlocutor of the Metis doing by committing funding to create another group on which to confer special rights?

Either the Minister of Canadian Heritage through Bill C-53 is the minister responsible for Metis or he is not. Clearly responsibility for Metis is outside the purview of the minister of Indian affairs. It should also be outside the purview of the Minister of Natural Resources. Why do we need two ministers responsible for the same issue?

We have a litany of funding and accounting problems in not only the Metis society in Saskatchewan, but there are problems in other jurisdictions as well. This is what Bill C-53 should be addressing.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Alfonso Gagliano (Secretary of State (Parliamentary Affairs) and Deputy Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, it is with pleasure that I address this House on Bill C-53, which confirms the structure of the Department of Canadian Heritage.

The Canadian government has used this bill to bring together under one roof several elements of our Canadian identity. Of course, when we speak of heritage, there are those who think of the past, of historic sites and buildings, of monuments and museums.

But there is much more than that. Our heritage is also the present and especially the future. That is why the new department includes: the development and promotion of our unique culture; communications and the development of the information highway; the cultural industries, which are taking their place, with much success, on the world scene; official languages, multiculturalism and heritage languages, essential elements of our national affirmation; amateur sports, which give expression to our search for excellence.

All these elements play a role in making us what we are, proud Canadians who are respected and envied the world over.

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I came to Canada at the age of 16. I chose this country for its promise of a future, social stability and a tradition of welcoming new citizens. And I must say that I was not disappointed.

(1625)

Yes, Canada's doors are open. Yes, Canada is full of opportunities. Yes, Canada is a land of justice and sharing. Yes, it is the best country in the world!

And even if the Canadian Heritage critic for the Official Opposition does not agree, I would like to tell him that there are millions and millions of human beings in the world who would give everything they have to be admitted into Canada and to live here with us. Despite our difficulties, our differences, our economic and financial problems, this country is still the best in the world. And in Quebec, it is a minority that wants to separate Quebec from the rest of Canada and destroy this country.

Let us not be misled, this country is still the best in the world. This fact has been recognized twice by the United Nations and most importantly it is acknowledged by all of us who, day after day, live in peace and prosperity on this vast North American territory.

I am a Canadian proud and aware of the considerable benefits that this country provides. I am also a full-fledged Quebecer who realizes how beneficial it is for us to be part of the Canadian entity.

There are few places in the world where two great cultures can blossom out in such harmony and with such autonomy as in Canada. And this is where the role of the Department of Heritage becomes so important. Our government recognizes that culture is not an abstraction detached from reality but a vital link that binds us all together.

As a matter of fact, in our red book, we say that "culture is the very essence of national identity, the bedrock of national sovereignty and national pride".

Several of our major cultural institutions, namely the CBC, the Canada Council, the National Film Board and Telefilm Canada contribute year after year to bring to the fore artistic talents from Quebec.

Heritage Canada supports, finances, develops markets for francophone cultural products that are essential to our artists in Quebec. The Canadian Museum of Civilizations in Hull, as well as the Quebec Citadel, trace the history of the first inhabitants and the first settlers that came here. Our parks and historic sites give the millions of tourists who visit our country an idea of the richness of our natural heritage.

The works of Michel Tremblay, Alice Parizeau, Antonine Maillet and many others have reached far beyond the boundaries of Quebec and of Canada. Those works are translated in several languages and have become the delight of readers all around the world.

The Cirque du soleil, a unique cultural product, conceived and realized by Quebecers, fills with wonder the young and not so young on several continents.

Quebec films, songs and plays have extensions on all continents. In television, the TV5 channel opens a window on the French-speaking world. This international cooperation allows also the francophonie to learn what goes on in our country. Programs produced in this country are broadcasted in Rome, Warsaw or Cairo.

The Canadian government plays a leading role in the expression and promotion of French culture in Canada and in the world.

We support creation. We support production. We encourage young artists. We negotiate agreements regarding export of our cultural products.

In the day-to-day life of French-speaking creators, the federal contribution is irreplaceable. Without the contribution of the Canadian government, many of our famous writers, our established actors and actresses, our renowned movie producers would have never taken off. We know it and this is why, despite our limited resources, we give particular attention to cultural development. This is part of our mandate, part of our responsibilities.

We should not underestimate the economic value of our cultural sector. Today, cultural enterprises rank ninth among our national industries. They generate direct revenues amounting to \$22 billion a year.

(1630)

About 600,000 Canadians work in this field. This clearly demonstrates that our cultural industries are closely linked to the economic development of our country and actively contribute to our prosperity. In addition to preserving and promoting native, French and English cultures, Canada officially recognizes its multiculturalism.

Moreover, the building of this country has largely been influenced by several waves of immigrants who made their homes here. Thousands of immigrants have developed Canada's natural resources. They have settled vast territories. They have helped build our cities.

Most regions of Canada have developed their own characteristics inherited from different cultural groups. This diversity is the hallmark of the Canadian identity and culture. Canadian multiculturalism is two-pronged. It encourages all Canadians to take an active part in society, in either official language. It also urges society to get rid of all obstacles impeding full and equal participation.

Cultural harmony is being promoted through initiatives such as teaching heritage languages, assisting ethnic artists and encouraging cross-cultural activities. While recognizing that

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our roots are an important part of our identity, Canadian multiculturalism urges us to make a commitment to Canada. It respects everyone's cultural identity. It encourages creativity and cultural exchanges. It helps us to realize not only what our rights are as a member of society, but also what are our responsibilities.

In Canada, we do not ask newcomers to leave their culture at the door to be welcome. As the Prime Minister would say, you can be proud of being a Canadian as well as a Quebecer. That is what makes us Canadians so unique.

The role of the Heritage Department is precisely to support the development of our national identity. Having grouped all the means of expression of this identity under one department, the government is being consistent. In so doing it is ensuring sound management of our investments and greater efficiency. It proves that federalism can be adapted to our society's changing needs. It proves that several cultures, living in harmony and sharing, can flourish on the same territory. It proves that, together, we can create and share a reality which is unique in the world, and that is the Canadian identity.

[English]

This is a time when we have to pull together. Yes, we have some financial difficulties. Yes, we have some serious problems that we have to solve. However, we should look at the number of people outside Canada who are waiting in line in different parts of the world in different Canadian embassies. Think of the millions of human beings who would give everything they have to be here in Canada, to be a Canadian resident, to be a Canadian citizen. Yes, we have problems. Yes, we have a lot of differences. I think that as in the past we can work together, pool our resources and continue to ensure that this is a country of generosity, a country of understanding.

(1635)

It is only by working together in this globalization that we are going through that we can survive and maintain this unique Canadian way of doing things. We have the Canadian way of welcoming new Canadians in this country and a Canadian way of making sure that our seniors are protected. We have a way of protecting our health system. This is unique if I may be allowed to say that.

That in a way represents Canadians' generosity. Look at me. I came to Canada when I was 16 years old. Today I am a member of Parliament, the highest tribunal in the land. I speak the two official languages. I am of Italian origin. I raised a family. We worked together and we are proud of our achievements.

I was able to achieve because our country and our system allows me to achieve. Therefore I will work hard in future months to make sure that the federal system that we have

ensures equality and protection for everyone. We have prosperity and hope that our children will have it.

I am sure there is a solution to all the differences and all the problems that we have. The only way we can solve this is working together. We look forward to solving these problems. A lot of countries look at us and at the way we have been solving and will continue to solve our differences. This is the future of the world. This is where the rest of the world is going.

It would be a shame to depart from this tradition, the way we have been doing things for 125 years.

[Translation]

Mrs. Suzanne Tremblay (Rimouski—Témiscouata): Mr. Speaker, I congratulate my colleague from Saint-Léonard. It is the first time I have had the honour to listen to him in this House and I did so attentively. Other duties prevented me from hearing him before. I do not want that to be taken in a negative way.

I listened to his speech attentively. What struck me the most is that to define himself as a Canadian, the hon. member for Saint-Léonard only spoke about Quebec francophones, which is rather surprising. So I went to see my colleague from Calgary Southeast to ask her the name of an English philosopher, which she could not remember either. There is an English Canadian—whose name you probably know—now living in Vancouver who has asked out loud what many people quietly think: Is there a Canadian identity? The answer is no. There is no Canadian identity. What is a Canadian? Who is a Canadian? Is it someone who lives in Canada? I myself live in Canada because I do not have a choice but I am a Quebecer and not a Canadian. The Premier of Quebec made a mistake; he did not know any more if he could be a Canadian or a Quebecer, a Quebecer or a Canadian.

A Canadian is defined as someone who lives in Canada, in a country with two languages, multiculturalism and everything. Come on! That is not what defines a Canadian. So he spoke only of Quebec's French-speaking writers. We never denied Radio-Canada's part in Quebec's francophone culture. We never denied this or any other roles. But what is the heritage department doing now? It is cutting off all funding to the National Film Board. They are strangling the NFB. Telefilm Canada was ordered to cut from 5 per cent to 8 per cent. They will no longer be able to produce films.

It is the same everywhere. Let us stop deluding ourselves. It may be the most beautiful country in the world, but I have seen the Rockies and they are nothing compared to Charlevoix.

Mr. Gagliano: Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for her initial remarks. She is trying to define what it is to be a Canadian. I have always defined myself as a Canadian, a Quebecer of Italian descent. That is the beauty of it. I tried to explain it earlier. I started to in English, and I will now continue in French.

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(1640)

That is the difference. I think that I am a product of what we could call a Canadian. I came to Canada when I was 16 years old. I have no problem with this country that may mean nothing to you because you do not care much about the Rockies, but Charlevoix is quite beautiful. As far as I am concerned, the Rockies are beautiful and so is Charlevoix. I have no problem because I feel like a Canadian, like a Canadian and a Quebecer, and it is this country, this country's federal system that the Official Opposition, the Bloc Quebecois, criticizes day in and day out and are trying to destroy.

An hon. member: You are talking about a single culture.

Mr. Gagliano: I am not talking about a single culture, but rather two official languages, the French culture—as I indicated in previous speeches—the English culture, and a multicultural culture. That is the Canadian reality, its cultural identity, with both the French and English cultures and the multiculturalism that make Canada a tolerant country, as I said in my speech, if only the hon. member had listened.

When you come to Canada, you must not leave your culture at the door; you must bring it along, protect and nurture it, and together with other cultures continue to build this great country. Globalization is a world-wide phenomenon. We must not fence ourselves in as the Bloc Quebecois and the Parti Quebecois are trying to do in Quebec.

We have faith in this huge country stretching from the Atlantic to the Pacific.

Mrs. Tremblay (Rimouski—Témiscouata): Mr. Speaker, point of order. The member cannot say that the Bloc Quebecois wants to keep Quebec inside a small culture. I ask him to withdraw his remarks right away.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): I am listening carefully to the speeches on both sides of the House, and with all due respect to all hon. members, I do not believe that this is a point of order. I again give the floor to the Hon. Secretary of State.

Mr. Gagliano: Mr. Speaker, I do not know if the hon. member understood me or if I expressed myself poorly; I was talking about fencing oneself in and said “clôture”; I did not wish to imply that it is a small culture, and did not say “culture”. Perhaps my colleague was not wearing an earphone; I said fencing, because I have great respect for the French culture. In the ten years that I have been here, I have always defended the French language and culture and Quebecers' rights and the interests of the Canadian Confederation. She needs only refer to the *Hansards* which report everything that is said in the House and even what is said outside the House. So she thinks I said

small culture, but I was talking about fencing. Either I mispronounced the word or she misunderstood.

Personally, I respect the hon. member's option. I believe in this Canada. I feel comfortable defining myself as a Canadian. I am Canadian. I feel confident. I believe that in spite of all our differences, Canada will continue to exist and will continue to develop. Canada will become a model in the world because it is the only way, with a strong Quebec inside Canada. That is the difference! A strong Quebec inside Canada; that is the difference and that is how Canada will be a model for the rest of the world. When we see what is happening in the rest of the world, people will look to Canada, and the Canadian federal system will still be the best. In the future, you will see that Canada's federal system will continue to progress and succeed despite our differences; the whole world envies us and will continue to envy us.

[*English*]

Mrs. Jan Brown (Calgary Southeast): Mr. Speaker, I too appreciated the comments of the hon. member.

I am going to phrase the context of my remarks within the history of my family. My grandfather came from Croatia as a very young man. He was thinly clothed, he had very little money and he certainly did not have any government waiting to give him a handout when he came here. He came alone, without his young wife and without his baby daughter, my mother. They stayed behind in Croatia. He worked his heart out for three years and he paid their way over here. In all of the years I knew my grandfather until he died at 68 years old he worked and paid his own way. Our family learned that tradition of paying your own way. You do not go to government for handouts. If you have a problem you go to your family, you go to your friends and you go to your community support and that does not mean a federal handout.

(1645)

I am also quite concerned that this debate is grinding down into a Quebecer and English Canadian issue. This is not the issue today. The issue is the legislation of Bill C-53 which means—and let me say it again—we are looking at entrenching multiculturalism funding and we cannot afford it. We are looking at national enforced bilingualism and we cannot afford it. We also cannot afford the funding of special interest groups.

When the hon. member speaks about the economic impact of some of our cultural industries bringing \$22 billion into our coffers that is a drop in the bucket against a \$532 billion deficit whereby this government will only bring in revenue of \$110 million per day. It spends more every day than it brings in. It does not take very long to eat up \$22 billion. I would like the

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hon. member to perhaps refer to a cross benefit analysis that he has done to substantiate his remarks.

Finally, the hon. member has not addressed the real issue here. In this legislation there is no downsizing, no streamlining and no financial savings. That quite frankly is what Canadian taxpayers are looking for from this government. Those are the things they are looking for because those are the promises of that infamous Liberal red book.

Mr. Gagliano: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question. I would like to tell my hon. colleague that when I came to Canada I did not receive anything. Everything I did I paid for. I went to night school and I paid for the lessons. I shovelled snow in the winter and delivered groceries. I did these things and I am proud of it. However, that does not mean that because some years ago we were in a certain situation people in need should be forgotten.

I agree with the hon. member that there is abuse in the system and we are trying to correct it. I believe the hon. member does not draw a line of what the legislation is and what she would like the legislation to do.

This is a bill to organize a department. This bill is to legalize, to put in perspective of the law the departmental reorganization that the Prime Minister announced in November 1993 when we took office. She mentioned the red book. We had a promise that would cut expenses right away from the top, from the Prime Minister's office down to all the ministers of \$10 million a year. I think so far we have accounted for \$13 million. This part of the reorganization.

In terms of funding that the member is talking about, the member should take note, probably next week when the Minister of Finance goes before the finance committee and presents his budgetary vision on the next budget and consults with Canadians, of the estimates. That is where funding is provided for every program and for every department.

What we are talking about here is the legal frame of a department. We see here 40 departments that we had in 1984 reduced down to 22. These are the savings and the promise that we kept in the red book.

I invite the hon. member to wait until Wednesday when the minister of human resources will table his discussion paper on social programs. I am sure she has a lot of things to say there and I am sure she will contribute to the debate, not only in this House but also across the country. I am sure she is waiting patiently for the Minister of Finance to come to this House and go to the finance committee to give reference of his consultation for the next budget. There hopefully altogether we will continue to reduce expenses and look at ways we can serve our citizens more with less.

(1650)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): Before continuing debate on Bill C-53 it is my duty pursuant to Standing Order 38 to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: The hon. member for Mercier—unemployment; the hon. member for The Battlefords—Meadow Lake—low level flights.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jean H. Leroux (Shefford): Mr. Speaker, I would like to express my views on Bill C-53, An Act to establish the Department of Canadian Heritage and to amend and repeal certain other acts. The Department of Communications, the Department of the Secretary of State and the Department of Multiculturalism and Citizenship were abolished following the government reorganization announced on June 25 and November 4, 1993. This exercise resulted in the creation of a new portfolio, the Department of Canadian Heritage.

For the first time, all federal agencies in the cultural sector, including the Canada Council, CBC, the National Film Board, Telefilm Canada, the national museums and parks of Canada, the National Archives and many others, are part of a single superdepartment.

I want to quote an important provision regarding a field which comes under the minister's jurisdiction. Clause 4(g), on page 2, states that the Minister of Canadian Heritage must promote "the advancement of the equality of status and use of English and French and the enhancement and development of the English and French linguistic minority communities in Canada".

That clause provides a good description of the federal government's objective to promote a Canadian cultural identity primarily based on the main features of a bilingual and multicultural Canada. However, no reference is made to Quebec as a society, nor to its cultural and linguistic specificity.

Once again, Ottawa denies the distinct cultural reality of Quebec by attempting to dilute its French status and culture in a supposedly bilingual and multicultural Canadian cultural identity. The creation of that department is in compliance with the defunct Charlottetown Accord, which proposed an artificial and false recognition of the provinces' exclusive jurisdiction over culture.

Never in the past, much less now, did the federal government consider withdrawing from the cultural sector despite Quebec's demands for the transfer of cultural jurisdiction and related budgets from Ottawa. The establishment of this new department is proof positive of this: the federal government is turning a deaf ear to Quebec's demands concerning language, education and, most of all, culture.

The federal government will continue to use its spending power to play a role in Quebec without any regard to the priorities and demands of the Quebec government in matters of language, education, and culture. How many more times will we

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have to fight for Quebec's interests and demands? Why is the federal government ignoring Quebec's jurisdiction over culture and language?

My colleagues on this side of the House received a clear mandate to stand for the interests of Quebecers. Quebec's demands concerning cultural and linguistic jurisdiction are part of that mandate, and I will fight for them with conviction and determination.

I would like to quote what the late member for Brome—Misisquoi, Gaston Pélouquin, was forever repeating to us and trying to convey to his constituents. It is a true depiction of the Canadian situation.

(1655)

“The fundamental difference between the two solitudes is that Canada is a country looking for a people, and Quebec is a people looking for a country”. The fact that my federalist friends refuse to talk about sovereignty does not mean it will not happen. Quebecers will be deciding for themselves, and the other nine provinces will have to accept that decision out of respect for justice and democracy.

The federal government keeps encroaching on exclusive Quebec jurisdictions. It can offer no guarantee about language, education and culture.

The Canadian Heritage Department is a typical example of this kind of interference in an area of jurisdiction claimed by Quebec. Essentially, the policies and priorities of the department, which were designed without consulting Quebec, are more in line with the prospect of an hypothetical country-wide cultural identity which seeks the outright assimilation, sooner or later, of the French language and the Quebec culture. I believe that is the real objective of the federal government.

[English]

The notion of cultural identity is what brings people together in a society. This notion helps to build and establish on a permanent basis the institutions that constitute a given society. What this government must understand is that the notion of cultural identity cannot be commanded or imposed in a democratic system or regime.

Thus the federal government cannot make an abstraction of the French culture and language that give distinct identity to Quebec society. The fact is that Canada is constituted by two nation states. Canada is not composed of a unique culture as the federal government would like us to believe.

These are the facts and the Minister of Canadian Heritage will have to deal with them.

[Translation]

History clearly demonstrates this. The federal government has always been trying to ignore the cultural identity of franco-

phones, and its bilingualism policy is the proof. Bilingualism in Canada is a myth, a beautiful dream, a policy that has never really worked. We must say it: the bilingualism policy has proven to be a real failure.

The fact is that francophones cannot live and get an education in French everywhere in Canada. We have the example of Franco-Ontarians. Their history is marked by struggles, by legal battles and, indeed, a resistance to assimilation. And we have the most recent example of Longlac, in northern Ontario, where the francophone community is unable to get services.

A second example are the francophone and Acadian communities in the rest of Canada. In a submission to the Standing Joint Committee on Official Languages in the House of Commons in May, the Fédération des communautés francophones et acadiennes sounded the alarm, sending out a cry of distress and demanding that the federal government emerge from its indifference.

I quote the federation: “The emergency situation in which members of our communities are living is unacceptable. The assimilation rate, which is increasing from one census to another, and the social and economic situation, which is deteriorating, do not seem to worry the government overly—”

On a five-year period, the assimilation rate has increased by 4.5 per cent in the overall francophone regions outside Quebec. That is a fact. If we do not act immediately, assimilation will continue on its irreversible course, whatever people think and say here.

(1700)

A third example: the closure of the Collège militaire royal de Saint-Jean. This decision is, I believe, the worst the federal government has taken in a decade.

How can the federal government justify the closure of the only French-speaking military college in the country and continue to promote its bilingualism policy? How will the federal government be able to ensure progress towards equality of status and use of the French language in the armed forces without a single French-speaking institution in this country?

According to reports the Kingston military college is not at all ready to accommodate French-speaking servicemen and to offer them the necessary training.

Those are the facts. This is the reality. The federal government denies francophones an equal status.

To continue on the same subject, I would like to give the House some statistics. Out of 13,000 so-called bilingual positions in the armed forces, only 6,000 are held by individuals sufficiently fluent in French and in English. The other 7,000 so-called bilingual positions are held by individuals who speak only English.

This again shows that the bilingualism policy has failed in Canada.

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Here is another figure. The great majority, 85 per cent, of the 63,870 designated bilingual positions across the country are along the Ottawa—Montreal—Quebec axis.

As a consequence, the budget cuts that would lead to the elimination of the annual bilingualism bonus advocated by the Commissioner of Official Languages would affect mainly francophones working in the federal public service. It would mean approximately \$43 million in lost wages for francophone bilingual employees working in the federal public office.

Such is the initiative to promote a cultural identity based on bilingualism as a main characteristic of Canada from coast to coast.

Ottawa's lack of global vision considerably hinders the development and prosperity of francophone communities throughout the country.

When answering a question from the opposition about this claim, the Minister of Canadian Heritage admitted that presently, his government had no global policy for the promotion of the development and prosperity of the French fact.

The attacks the current Liberal government carries out in reaction to the Bloc Québécois's demands simply seek to blind us to the failures of its policies to promote French in the English-speaking provinces.

Those who suggest the status quo should know that, for a lot of francophones outside Quebec, in the long term, that means assimilation.

How can we deny that the fundamental difference between Quebec and Canada is precisely rooted in the fact that English Canada is unable to recognize the existence of French-speaking Quebecers as a nation?

Quebec's aspirations to develop as both a distinct nation and a full member of the Canadian federation were always repressed. Today, Quebec has chosen to develop within its own political infrastructures, as would a truly sovereign country.

Quebec's sovereignty is not a goal per se, it is rather the means to achieve the coherent development of our potential. It is the most appropriate means we have to make efficient use of our resources.

As long as it is in Ottawa the Bloc Québécois will keep on denouncing the federal institutions' indifference regarding Quebec and French language, education and culture.

I was sent here to shake up the political inertia of the federal government and to bring to the attention of the House of Commons the concerns of francophone communities wherever they may be in Canada.

The federal government must correct all its deficiencies in order to better answer the aspirations of francophone communities.

Quebecers have used most of their political energy over the last three decades to build a political structure that will allow them to develop as a people. It must be understood that if something binds Quebecers together it is their refusal of the status quo.

(1705)

Quebec's political and economic context has changed radically over the last fifteen years. Those changes explain the strong comeback of the sovereignist movement in Quebec after the referendum defeat in 1980, the Meech Lake Accord and the Charlottetown Accord.

Since the days of Jean Lesage, all the federalist premiers have struggled hard to provide the Quebec State with the decision-making powers which it needed to exercise a real control over our collective destiny.

The vast majority of Quebec federalists refuse the system in its present form. What made them different from sovereignists for a long time is that they hoped that the system could be modified, especially by transferring powers from Ottawa to Quebec and recognizing the distinct nature of the Quebec people.

For their part, sovereignists had come to the conclusion that Quebecers could never fully develop as a nation within the federal framework the structures of which were frozen in time.

After 30 years of fruitless efforts and countless attempts to change the federal system, even federalists in Quebec have to face reality: the failure of the Meech Lake and Charlottetown accords have put an end to any hope for a renewed federalism.

Today, Quebecers, both federalists and sovereignists alike, can be sure of one thing regarding the status quo: they can either take it or leave it. Everyone will have to make this choice. Nevertheless, when it comes to the mandate of the Department of Canadian Heritage, we cannot have just one cultural policy since we have two distinct cultures.

As such, the policy of the Department of Canadian Heritage cannot be developed and applied uniformly across the country. Consequently, the Bloc Québécois will make sure that the various measures taken by the federal government are in tune with the general direction of Quebec's cultural policy.

The Bloc Québécois will demand that Quebec get its fair share of federal funding through the main cultural institutions such as museums, the National Film Board and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation.

The Bloc Québécois will also make sure that cuts in the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation's budget will not be made

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at the expense of its French network and, therefore, of Quebec artists.

The Bloc Quebecois will also ensure that the Quebec cultural community receives its fair share of grants from federal agencies such as the Canada Council and Telefilm Canada and from the resource envelopes of the program.

Such is the mandate I received from Shefford constituents and I intend to be worthy of their trust.

Hon. Diane Marleau (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, I am always interested to hear members of the Bloc Quebecois talk about their culture and about other French Canadians, especially Franco-Ontarians, and how they are going to be assimilated, saying that the federal government has no role to play.

I must tell you that I am a French Canadian, born in northern Ontario in a family which has been living there for generations. I was raised and educated in French.

Let me tell you that my roots are the same as theirs, even though for economic reasons, my ancestors chose to go and build a country, Canada. Some stopped in Ontario, others continued further west. We now have our schools, several of them in fact. There are programs to teach English to francophones and French to anglophones.

(1710)

It is certainly not perfect, but it is a lot better than it was 30 years ago. Do you think for one moment that without a federal government we, francophones from outside Quebec, would have had anything from people like the members opposite who choose to deny our very existence, and claim they are the only francophones in Canada? May I ask them what role they intend to play in the life of my children or my grand-children with their activities? To resort to such trickery is a disgrace.

Mr. Leroux (Shefford): Mr. Speaker, I wish to thank my colleague for her comments. I simply quoted figures in my speech. When you hear about the assimilation process taking place in Canada and see figures, real figures, like the ones I quoted, I think there can be no doubt. We are all entitled to our opinions and to think that things are actually better around us, but in the light of objective figures—those I quoted were from Statistics Canada if I am not mistaken—I would say it is undeniable.

As the minister said, she is, of course, bilingual. As far as I am concerned, I used to teach English as a second language before I was elected to this House. I must tell you that I have a great deal of respect for the English language, and the English culture in general. My thinking regarding Quebec changed progressively; it was not a choice made overnight.

When I was younger, I did not belong to a sovereignist political party; I was a federalist. Then, in 1980, I voted yes in

the referendum, and this was the proudest day of my life. I am very proud of having voted yes. Since then, I have matured. I think that is the right thing to do. I would like francophones outside Quebec to be provided better protection. I would like them to have rights.

During Statements by members under Standing Order 31 today, I rose to point out that, in Northern Ontario today, francophones are having problems getting recognized. I do not know where the hon. minister is from or what newspapers she reads, but this is a fact and I think it is important to point it out. Canada as a country will continue to exist; I have no doubt about that.

I remember reading a book that said that birds migrate to the south and that Canada was a fictitious country because it stretched from East to West while the normal axis was North-South. I think it must be true.

When Canada was an English colony, the English had lost the whole southern part and they wanted to protect the North; that is how a fictitious country with two founding peoples was born. Of course, many other cultures came and joined them and they must be respected.

People tend to think that minorities are poorly protected in Quebec. I would like to tell you that the English courses given in our schools in Quebec are improving. Our English-speaking fellow citizens have good facilities, like hospitals in Montreal, schools, three universities in Quebec territory. No other province does as much for its minority, except possibly the national capital, with the University of Ottawa and Saint Paul University. Except for that, there is nothing. I think that it is important to say so.

I want to tell you that I want Quebec to be a sovereign country. Yes, Quebec and Canada should have good relations; we should learn to live together side by side in harmony and trade with each other. As you know, one side cannot do it alone. We in the Bloc Quebecois are in this debate and we will win.

[English]

Mrs. Jane Stewart (Brant): Mr. Speaker, I feel compelled to follow the line of questioning of my colleague, the Minister of Health. I am sure I heard the hon. member talk about his commitment, his responsibility and his party's responsibility for francophones outside Quebec.

(1715)

If they are successful in creating a country called Quebec, how do they expect to honour those commitments to francophones outside of Quebec? Instead of focusing on francophones and their needs in this great country, are they focusing instead on the creation of a country for the self-serving politicians who in fact want to lead a nation?

Mr. Leroux (Shefford): Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for her question.

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In the same way that Quebecers treat their minorities well, I believe that in a separate Canada Canadians will treat their minorities well. It will be both sides treating their minorities well. That is important for the future of our maybe two countries. I do not think there is a problem.

[Translation]

Mr. Patrick Gagnon (Parliamentary Secretary to Solicitor General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, I listened very attentively to the hon. member's comments and I find it strange that he did not mention that, while there are 1 million francophones outside Quebec, 250 anglophones are now enrolled in French immersion classes. We were even told that young Chinese are enrolling in large numbers in Vancouver's French-language schools, a fact that should not be forgotten. I still think that they forgot to tell us about Canadian realities. Despite what they say, this is not a fictitious country. This is a wealthy country that belongs to the Group of Seven and that has achieved a great deal. We helped liberate France, Belgium and the rest of Europe in World War II. I think that Canadians have demonstrated their maturity, their know-how. They got involved when other countries did not heed the call. I think that we were able to accommodate Quebecers' needs and desires, because the federal government has invested heavily in Quebec to enable it to express its identity.

Our Quebec includes Natives and anglophones. The Quebec forest that their PQ friends in Quebec City talk about is not only French-speaking; it also includes several cultural communities. Yet, I hear the hon. member speak as though only those people descended from the 60,000 settlers identified by Lionel Groulx were real Quebecers.

I would like to know if, in his opinion, today's Quebec includes other cultures. We often hear about a Quebec open to the world but the hon. member would have us forget this 15 or 20 per cent of the population that is an important part of Quebec as we know it today.

Mr. Leroux (Shefford): Mr. Speaker, I will respond to my hon. colleague simply by quoting figures to show him that the tree always falls on the same side here in Canada. Of the 13,000 so-called bilingual positions in the armed forces, 6,000 are held mainly by bilingual francophones, while the other 7,000 are held by anglophones for lack of bilingual candidates. Yet they decided to close the military college in Saint-Jean where anglophones could have been trained in French, where they could have taken immersion classes and gone outside the military community to experience a little Quebec culture and practice their French. But no, they will be taught French in Kingston where there is no immersion, where they will stay in an English-speaking environment and try to learn French as best they can.

That is an example of this government's bad decisions. The tree always falls on the side of the majority. If we look at what is happening in Canada, it is very difficult for a majority to

understand a minority. However, since Quebecers are a minority in Canada, we understand well the problems of the anglophone minority in Quebec and we have given anglophones their own institutions. I challenge anyone in this House to find better anywhere else in Canada.

(1720)

[English]

Mr. Dennis J. Mills (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Industry): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to speak on this legislation. I begin by saying that as I sit and listen to the Bloc Quebecois I continue to wonder whether we have lost our minds.

We are looking back over the last 25 years. I had the great privilege and opportunity to work for the greatest Prime Minister this country ever had, Pierre Trudeau. I think of what this one Quebecer did to make sure that the presence of the francophone culture permeated every region of this country. I think of the fights and the battles and the commitment that he led to move and expand opportunities for Quebecers right across this country, not just in the public service.

By his example and by his presence, he created an environment where Quebec business leaders are now running companies in every part of our country. I think of the Public Service of Canada right across this country. Maybe it is not a majority but a very high percentage, very close to 50 per cent of the public service positions right now are managed by francophones. In fact most of these senior positions are bilingual imperative.

I know that the system is not perfect, but there are signs regarding the great experiment, the great drive to respect so much of what the members in the Bloc are fighting for, respect for their culture and respect for their language. I cannot believe that they do not really believe in their heart of hearts that it has moved forward tremendously.

Could one imagine 10 or 15 years ago that in the province of Alberta today, as we now have, there are lineups to get into French immersion schools? If 15 years ago someone stood up in Alberta and predicted that in 1990 there would be lineups to get into French immersion schools, the person making that statement would have been thought out of his or her mind. But that is the reality of Canada today. There are lineups to get into French immersion schools in nearly every part of this country, including my own community.

I do not want to suggest that the system is perfect, but we have moved a long way. I will tell this House what bothers my constituents. We are trying to build this country, trying to develop national programs and a national spirit. We have tried to move the French language into radio, television and into senior positions in the public service. Now, all of a sudden, we have a small group here from the province of Quebec who would say to all of Canada: "Well, it was a nice try". In spite of the billions and billions of dollars that all Canadians have paid to make this great experiment work, we now have a small group of people

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here who want to say: "We quit. We quit this great experiment". It is more than an experiment; it is working.

I am very excited about this bill because I have always believed in the Government of Canada presence being promoted right across this country. One of the reasons why I ran to be a member of Parliament in downtown Toronto was because I opposed the Meech Lake accord.

(1725)

I opposed the Meech Lake accord because I do not believe in dismantling national programs and national institutions. I do not believe in giving any group preferential status in this country. I believe in a multicultural society. A multicultural society means to me that no culture is less than or greater than another culture.

When one wants to talk about a distinct society that has special status, do not count on me to support that kind of thrust where one gives a special status to any particular culture in this country. Respect for bilingualism? It is the law of the land. I support that fully. However, to give special status to one culture over another, no way. That is not on.

One of the reasons the Bloc Quebecois does not like this legislation is that it will once again reinvigorate the department that is so important in our rebuilding the Government of Canada presence in the province of Quebec.

We talk in this bill about making sure that our parks and all of our Canadian symbols, our broadcasting and our cultural policy reflect the fact that we are a country from coast to coast. We do not just go from the west coast and jump over Quebec to Atlantic Canada. This is a country from coast to coast.

Nothing should please Canadians more than making sure that the federal presence is reinvigorated in the province of Quebec. I believe, and this is where I come apart from my friends in the Reform Party, that if we want to keep this country together, we have to spend some money.

An hon. member: Your grandchildren's money.

Mr. Mills (Broadview—Greenwood): The member is absolutely right. The Reform Party says that it will be my grandchildren's money. I don't have any yet, but hopefully.

There will not be anything for our grandchildren if we do not rebuild the national presence, the Government of Canada presence, and the symbols of Canada in the province of Quebec.

This is what I cannot understand from the Reform Party. For 10 years we had a Prime Minister, Mr. Mulroney, who basically retreated from building, exposing or showing what the Government of Canada did in Quebec. He was quite happy to shovel off and devolve responsibility to the operating province of Quebec.

One of the reasons we have such a strong separatist feeling in Quebec right now is that the Government of Canada presence, the services, the programs, the symbols and the things that all Canadians pay for, is not realized by Quebecers. It is in the billions. In no other province in Canada do we have a situation like that.

When government programs, government services and government activities happen in all the other provinces and in the Northwest Territories, they are plainly and clearly identified. However, in the province of Quebec we basically dismantle the federal presence. That of course is the reason as I said earlier why the Bloc Quebecois does not like this legislation. With this legislation we are going to once again try to rebuild that presence.

If we go to Quebecers and ask: "Do you want to continue to be a part of Canada?", let us at least let Quebecers know what we are doing.

(1730)

It has nothing to do with the heritage department. It has to do with all those symbols, services and programs that right now are not known as Government of Canada services and projects. Once again I stand here and say we in this Chamber are trying to rebuild the spirit of this country. We are trying to make sure there is a national feeling shared by all Canadians right across the country. I hope that one day a large majority of Quebecers will see that the best opportunity for their language and culture is by being a part of the whole nation.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Suzanne Tremblay (Rimouski—Témiscouata): Mr. Speaker, I feel my temper rising, but I will try to stay calm. Really, that is the absolute limit! That is dreadful! Where does the parliamentary secretary come from? Toronto, surely. He apparently visits Ottawa, but he never goes anywhere else because what he says is totally false.

For nine years, the Right Hon. Brian Mulroney did everything in his power to bring Quebec back into Canada. Take Meech Lake, for example, who blocked it? Who stood in the way? The Grits did, the hon. member in particular. He just admitted it. There was a lady whom we cannot name, who is now somewhere, but we cannot say where, and who has just been rewarded for doing the good deeds requested today by the lady whom we cannot name. I refer to Sharon Carstairs. We will not name her. That was one.

Two, the sorry tale of Charlottetown. What a farce. What a pity there was no Mr. Lisée in 1867 to tell us how Canada was built. What about a railway system right across Canada? And a ferry to Prince Edward Island in perpetuity; so we amended the Constitution for the ferry. The deed was done in a business-like fashion by a bunch of businessmen with no long-term vision

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about the chaos they were sending this country into. We no longer have a railway system. That was the only cross-country link we had, and it does not exist any more.

Mrs. Ringuette—Maltais: Thanks to the electronic highway, we have made progress, in our part of the country.

Mrs. Tremblay (Rimouski—Témiscouata): We will see what happens in New Brunswick. He says that Canada is not visible in Quebec. This is why they want to implement their social reform. They want to give students a cheque with a red flag on it. They want to bring together the young and the old. They scare old people when they give them a cheque with a red flag. But seniors in Quebec are no dummies. They know what is going on. They realize that whether the cheque is blue or red, the money comes from our pockets. There is no pot from which to hand out money to Quebec seniors every month. There is no such thing and seniors have figured that out a long time ago.

Actually, Canada is visible in Quebec. There are big signs now. But they never thought of putting up such signs before Mr. Lévesque's government decided to do just that. Such an idea had never occurred to them. Only when Mr. Lévesque got his blue signs out did we start to see nice red signs go up. Now, those signs are black and white; they are as bleak as can be. Like the future of Canada. Completely shut out in total darkness. Such is Canada's visibility. Canada never gave us our fair share. This is what we said; this is what Quebecers know; this is what we will show and demonstrate to them. Canada has no future in Quebec and Quebecers will remember that on referendum day.

[English]

Mr. Mills (Broadview—Greenwood): Mr. Speaker, I did not mean to get the member upset.

The member stated that Canada has no place in Quebec. If I understood the member correctly, she implied that the rest of Canadians have not done that much to contribute to the development of Quebec within the context of Canada. It is sad the member believes that because we are all doing our best to make this work. Today several members on this side of the House have stated that the system is not perfect but it has been getting better. By refusing to work at building the country the member will only make the situation worse because the facts will eventually be communicated to Quebecers.

(1735)

We are entering a very tough period where not only Quebecers are doing the substantial in depth analysis of government programs and services and fiscal transfers. We are talking about programs and transfers of all the things related to our heritage not only in the province of Quebec but right across the country.

When all of those analyses are done, as the Bloc so often likes to do line by line, Quebecers will see that Canada is a much better deal than most of them ever realized. Certainly when every member in the Bloc goes through the line by line exercise in relation to the whole, they are going to see that Canada is the place to be.

Mrs. Jan Brown (Calgary Southeast): Mr. Speaker, I am a westerner and I am from Alberta and I heard—

Mr. Speaker, excuse me. Remarks such as those are out of order. I have an opportunity to speak on this floor.

In my view the hon. member who just spoke did not speak of a long term vision that addressed all of us in Canada. Is his view that what is required now is to continue to increase program spending to pacify Quebec? Quebecers appear to have made a decision here. The hon. member is suggesting that indeed we have not yet spent enough to facilitate and support Quebec to keep it in this federation, which quite frankly is falling apart.

This bill is about legislating and entrenching multiculturalism which we cannot afford, national bilingualism which we cannot afford, and special interest group funding which we cannot afford. As an Albertan and a westerner I take great exception to the fact that this debate keeps wallowing in the issue of Quebec separation.

I would like the hon. member to address these points and to remember that Canada does extend beyond the Ontario border. There is a whole other part of this country called Canada and it is the west. The west is getting really fed up with all of this talk as well because it is all just talk. I am equally as disgusted and fed up as the hon. member from Quebec who just spoke. I am fed up with this whole debate as well, because it is going nowhere. It is grinding down into a ridiculous discussion about more spending and Canadian taxpayers will not tolerate any more spending.

Mr. Mills (Broadview—Greenwood): Mr. Speaker, I am not sure whether the member was suggesting that more resources were needed in Alberta to augment the bilingualism line-ups. Is that what she meant?

(1740)

One of the greatest issues in western Canada which the western members especially those in the Reform Party talk about is eliminating the grants, program funding and all of those other things that help us develop as a nation. But very rarely do we hear members, especially those from Alberta telling us to cut the oil tax grants that are buried in the tax act of Canada. I cannot wait for the day when the hon. member says: "Cut those oil and tax grants". That is the day I am waiting for.

Mr. Jim Abbott (Kootenay East): Mr. Speaker, for the benefit of people reading *Hansard* I will tell them that I am wearing a tartan tie which I purchased in Scotland this summer. It is my family tartan and I am very proud of it.

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I just want to make a couple of comments about this whole business. The Liberals have permitted this debate to fall off the tracks. It has ended up in a squabble match between them and the Bloc over whether the Bloc is right or they are right or whatever.

As I said, my wife and I visited Scotland this summer. I was very impressed that the people of Scotland, who have much blood on the ground over various things which have happened in their history, are very, very proud of their Scottish heritage. I can only hope after we are successful in defeating the separatists in their referendum whenever they want to bring it, that the Quebecois in exactly the same way that the Acadians have, will say: "I am proud to be a Quebecer," in the same way that the people in Scotland say: "I am proud to be Scottish, but boy am I happy to be a part of the United Kingdom". I can only hope we will see a move in that direction.

The member for Broadview—Greenwood finally mentioned the word parks in this debate. Surprisingly in the grab bag that is Canadian Heritage, national parks are actually included. I suggest that parks possibly have more in common with the Department of the Environment. I have a couple of thoughts along that line in terms of the reorganization of the Department of Canadian Heritage.

The Canadian Parks Service objective for national parks as enunciated in 1991 is to protect for all time representative natural areas of Canadian significance in a system of national parks and to encourage public understanding, appreciation and enjoyment of this natural heritage so as to leave it unimpaired for future generations. It is for this reason that I suggest because of the very obvious close connection to the Department of the Environment that perhaps parks would be better served in a different department.

Let me also read from the 1990 publication "State of the Parks". The introduction says in part: "The national park profiles and national historic site profiles are designed to identify basic data for each park and site in the system. As such they will provide a context for the first state of the parks report. They represent a first attempt to provide a comprehensive reference list of the values, conditions and threats which occur throughout the system".

At another point it says: "At this stage the data for the profiles are preliminary and reports of conditions are generally based on professional judgments rather than definitive criteria. This report fills an important function in that it identifies quite specifically gaps in the information systems which need to be addressed". And this is the specific connection: "Canada's green plan will provide resources to take an ecosystem approach to the management of national parks. In co-operation with other services of the Department of the Environment, the parks

service will be developing indicators to measure the condition of the natural resources and the stability of the cultural resources".

(1745)

It is important to note that the introduction to this presentation in 1990 was done at a time when parks were actually a part of the Ministry of the Environment. Under Kim Campbell's regime she made this grab bag of Canadian heritage that now happens to include parks.

For reference let me also read from the news release from the current minister dated March 24, 1994. In its background, national heritage considerations, ecological integrity: "In the establishment and management of national parks, Parks Canada strives to maintain the ecological integrity of those protected areas. Ecological integrity is defined as a condition whereby the structure and function of an ecosystem are unimpaired by the stress of human activity and are likely to remain so.

The 1994 Parks Canada guiding principles and operational policies provide the framework for achieving this condition within national parks in conjunction with their sustainable use and enjoyment by visitors".

Parks are of great interest to me because I have three parks in my constituency; Kootenay National Park, Yoho National Park and Glacier National Park. Therefore I am quite interested in them. I have also taken time to read the current and most recent study from the Glacier—Mount Revelstoke National Park management plan.

In summary this very good document tells me the direction the park wants to go. Basically it is leave it alone, do not touch it. Leave it in its natural state. It also talks about the fact that if certain flora or fauna or smaller animals or birds have been removed through the mismanagement of the parks, the parks would like to add them back.

Interestingly though, they say that they will only let wild fires burn if they are in very remote areas and would simply go straight up the mountain. I can appreciate that where we have the Northlander Lodge and other buildings of that type, even parks buildings and camp sites with washroom facilities and so on and so forth that you would want to protect that area. However the difficulty is because we do not have a really clear definition of what we want to do in our parks. Because we have a Disneyland, Bambi kind of an idea about what a forest looks like, we are saying: "Leave it alone, except we will suppress fire".

The difficulty is that even in Glacier National Park there is an area of the park that has a campground in it that has root rot. Root rot is something perfectly normal that is going to happen to trees. Therefore, due to lack of understanding, people from

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Canada, the United States and Europe travelling through will say: "Oh my, how awful, this part of the forest has died".

Forests live and die in the same way that populations or people within populations live and die. We have a situation right now in Kootenay National Park—and I would suggest that this would be applicable to parks on the east coast and on the west coast—where we have a bug or a blight. We have in quite a number of trees an infestation where the trees are all turning red. How terrible. No, it is not terrible. That is part of nature's plan, of regeneration.

As a matter of fact the reason why we have dominantly lodgepole pines up through Banff, Kootenay Park, Yoho Park and on up through Jasper is because around 1885 for a three-year period fire actually started as far south as Mexico and slowly worked its way up so that we have this monoculture of lodgepole pine. The trees have now reached a point where they are attracting disease or bugs.

(1750)

If we as human beings have not learned anything from what was in many cases an explosion in Yellowstone National Park where the place turned into an absolute inferno with no conceivable way of being able to control that inferno, then we have not learned very much. Particularly in Banff National Park they have tried burning some of the undergrowth and underbrush, to try to maintain this Disneyland kind of Bambi, Smoky the Bear, approach to what a forest is supposed to look like.

I also read in the same report under sustainable use that throughout the consultative process leading to a revision of Parks Canada policies, discussions surrounding national parks underwent the most scrutiny. There was concern about which activities and facilities are appropriate within the confines of national parks.

In response a revised policy reflects the role of national parks as part of larger ecosystems. Therefore decision making must be based on an understanding of surrounding environments leading to partnerships for the protection and sustainable use of the whole ecosystem. In the national parks context this means that people gain direct and indirect benefits from heritage resources over the long term without destroying them.

Herein lies the conundrum. Herein lies the problem. In fact, in my judgment in many situations in our national parks—again I direct this to whether we are talking about the east coast, the far north, central Canada, because of our Disneyland approach to parks—we are actually letting the parks act as an incubator for bugs and disease where the trees are being killed. As a consequence we are loading the fuel and when it takes off there is going to be no stopping it. Commercial forests outside of parks are going to be negatively impacted either by disease, bugs or fire.

Glacier National Park has a budget of \$7.3 million and 99 full time people. Yoho National Park has a budget of \$5.8 million with 81 full time people. In the case of Glacier National Park the vast majority, 75 to 80 per cent, of the budget is for road clearing. I would like to know what in the world Heritage Canada is doing in the road clearing business when we have perfectly competent, capable, equipped departments, subcontractors or contractors to the provincial government?

To give an idea of where this is going, I have a press release in my hand of September 12 from Doug Martin, regional vice-president, Public Service Alliance of Canada and it reads: "Parks Canada is contemplating centralizing Yoho National Park highway crew to Banff and Lake Louise. Also being considered for transfer are the finance and store operations. Yoho employs approximately 60 full time and seasonal employees. The proposed transfer affects upwards of 40 employees who will be required to move to Alberta". It goes on and raises some very legitimate concerns.

I was speaking about an hour ago with the mayor of the town of Golden which is in my constituency. The mayor was asking me: "What is going on, what is happening?". He is going into a council meeting tonight. They want to know. They need to know.

I lay at the door of the Liberal government the fact that this area of parks management is completely up in the air, is rolling over, is appearing to be completely out of control. We are into a process of redirection and there is no direction from the top; the top level being the minister of parks.

(1755)

Furthermore, in taking a look at the whole issue of highways and asking why Parks Canada is in the highway business, I read in a note from the Northlander Lodge, which is up in Rogers Pass: "The Alberta Truckers Association lobbied long and hard and advanced the position that they should not have to pay to transport commercial goods across Canada on the Trans-Canada Highway just because the highway happened to go through the federal park". Parks Canada made a policy decision and in a speech in Calgary the minister announced that through commercial traffic would no longer have to pay a toll to go through the parks. He is asking if there is going to be a reimposition of the toll in the parks because it very directly impacts on his business.

If there is a reimposition of the toll for the vehicles going through the parks, then people coming through are going to be in a position of saying: I am not going to stop at the Northlander Lodge because I did not pay my permit; I am not going to stop for a cup of coffee, I am not going to stop for that extra gas that I think I need, I am going to bypass it. This directly affects him.

The reason why I am asking if it makes sense for parks to be in the highway business is that the last time I looked commercial vehicles, for that matter passenger vehicles, are presently paying to all the provinces diesel and fuel taxes that should be

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going to the capital cost of maintaining roads as well as the day to day maintenance of roads.

I believe in user pay. The Reform Party believes that those who are using a service should be paying for it. I understand that and I support that. However if it works to the detriment of the businesses that are located in the parks, then that is just plain wrong-headed thinking.

Right at the moment we have a situation in Kootenay National Park—again let me put in parenthesis that I am referring to some specific situations I am personally familiar with. I have every reason to believe that the same kind of situation is in place in virtually every park across Canada. We are talking about a management situation, what should we be doing. With the greatest respect to my friends across the way, the people are not getting direction from the top.

For example we are looking at enterprise units in parks. What is an enterprise unit in a park? If you have hot pools in Radium, in Banff and in Jasper and the revenue from the visitors to those pools is just going into consolidated revenue, that does not generate efficient management of those pools. As an example, that is the first of the enterprise units. They have hired an individual and the revenue coming in from the pools is going to be segregated so that they can use it to manage the park facilities related to the pools.

Here again, we have an issue of hiring practices. Should we not be making sure that the parks are in a position to be able to hire people with pool management backgrounds rather than being forced to hire from within the civil service, still with the civil service mind, to be able to get the job done?

In conclusion, I believe for dollar efficiency that the heritage department should turn over parks back to the environment department. I also believe in the concept of enterprise units, where you would have user pay so that you get the dollars to provide the service.

Finally, may I suggest that Canada sell the parks building in the very high rent district in Calgary, get out of Calgary, move the people into a town like Golden which is right in the centre, and manage the parks from a low rent district and a district that more reflects the area than the area the bureaucrats in Calgary are presently in.

(1800)

I thank you for the opportunity to speak to this issue, Mr. Speaker. These are a few ideas that I have with respect to parks. In summary I say I believe parks should be moved from heritage back to environment.

Mr. Brent St. Denis (Algoma): Mr. Speaker, I listened with great interest to the hon. member's comments. I was studying today's material about our national park system because my

riding of Algoma is one of the most beautiful areas in the country and should have been looked at seriously for a national park, parts of it anyway.

I wonder if the hon. member would comment on my concern and impression that he would like to see parks totally self-sufficient in a fiscal sense. Truly there are parks in this country that must be preserved for the good of our children that will never be sustainable on a purely fee for service basis.

Does he believe that the heritage of our country in its natural areas can only be preserved on a fee for service basis? Does he not believe that we cannot look at these resources only from that point of view?

Mr. Abbott: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for his question because it is very valid. If we were just talking about a fee for service basis and we were losing sight of the fact that the parts of the parks that people most frequently want to go to, like the Burgess Shale in Yoho Park, and I am sure there are some other specific areas that people want to go to, there must be a control. There must be a park warden. There must be people who are actually going through the process to make sure that the integrity of that area is under proper control.

I would suggest that for those areas in particular that where we have to be spending dollars using resources to give special protection to those areas, those areas should be not only preserved for the good of our children which would happen, not only totally self-sufficient but I believe they could actually be profit-making so that some of the cost of doing the general work that the member refers to would be able to come out of that revenue and thereby be less draining on our bankrupt treasury at this point.

Mr. Alex Shepherd (Durham): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member. I listened very intently to his concept of parks. I have been to a number of parks in his riding.

I guess the concern I have which follows along with the previous comment is whether our parks are ones that we want to prevent people from using based on their income. In other words, I think most people look at our parks in Canada as part of our national heritage. I suppose that is what we are debating today.

To the extent that a poor person possibly cannot access some of these areas, I think of the sulphur pools and so forth that the member is talking about, because the maintenance cost is such that they become prohibitive to do so, only wealthy people or middle class people, however you want to define that, will have access to our national parks. I wonder if that is not somewhat of an abuse of the concept of user pay.

I noted one other point. The hon. member talked about the roads that would not be user pay but that some of the facilities in the part should be. I wonder how he gets around that contradiction.

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Mr. Abbott: Mr. Speaker, handling the last point first, the roads currently are user pay and that is currently going into provincial coffers by way of fuel taxes.

What I am attempting to find out is the relationship between the amount of fuel tax that goes into the coffers of the province of B.C. and the fact that basically the province of British Columbia at this point appears to get off scott free from the very excessive costs of trying to keep Rogers Pass open which is a real chore. It is the same thing in Yoho Park.

The member's point is well taken and I have given a lot of thought to his question.

(1805)

In the area of the pools I do not think there would have to be an excessive charge. If they are handled on an entrepreneurial basis as their own enterprise unit, which is the experiment currently being tried, we would find that the prices probably would not have to go up. If there were an entrepreneurial spirit on the part of management it would end up taking care of itself.

It is just that previously when the dollars were coming in and then going into consolidated revenue, there was no connection between the dollars coming in and the maintenance required because the maintenance required did not have anything to do with the dollars coming in. That is why I support the concept of the enterprise unit.

I would suggest that the member and others consider the Tatshenshini which is an area as far north and west in British Columbia as one can go. It is a large triangle shape that fits into the top corner of the province, right behind the Alaska panhandle. This is an area that the province of B.C. has now turned into a class A provincial park.

I cannot afford to go there. I literally cannot afford to go there. I do not happen to have \$5,000 for a helicopter. I do not have another \$1,500 for the rafting. It is there if I have the resources and I want to go there. If I have the \$5,000 or \$6,500 I can get there, but I do not have those dollars.

I suggest that the member consider that what we have done in the case of Tatshenshini in the province of B.C., recognizing that it is not a national park but still in concept, is to take an area, set it aside, take it out of the mining grid and turn it over to people who happen to have \$6,500 so that they can raft down the river.

This concept of user pay for specific areas I do not think anybody is going to find too difficult when they put it against the cost of actually providing the service on a park by park basis.

[Translation]

Mr. Yves Rocheleau (Trois-Rivières): Mr. Speaker, as critic for the Industry, I am pleased to take part in this debate on the Department of Canadian Heritage Act, particularly since last Monday, exactly a week ago, I also raised, as critic for my Party, to speak on the Department of Industry Act, a piece of legisla-

tion aiming at combining former departments which was drafted by the Campbell government and copied by the current government.

At the time, we said that the Department of Industry had so many responsibilities and such a scope that the Parliamentary Secretary, who unfortunately has left, called his minister "superman". We said that we will leave it to the voters to decide whether or not the Prime Minister has made a wise decision.

During the debate, we recognized that the mandate of the Department of Industry was wide-ranging and that there was a lot of duplication with Quebec's regional development programs as well as with other federal institutions dealing with regional development, particularly the NRC.

But the reason I wanted to speak on this bill is that there is also a lot of duplication and overlap, and very little progress, where Canadian heritage and this bill are concerned. Indeed, when it comes to jurisdictions and the powers, duties and functions of the Minister of Industry, clause 4(1)(h) of Bill C-46 provides that the powers, duties and functions of the Minister extend to and include all matters over which Parliament has jurisdiction, not by law assigned to any other department, board or agency of the government of Canada, relating to

(h) patents, copyrights, trade-marks, industrial designs and integrated circuit topographies;

And pursuant to clause 4(1)(k), the powers of the Minister also extend to

(k) telecommunications, except in relation to (i) the planning and coordination of telecommunication services for departments, boards and agencies of the Government of Canada, and (ii) broadcasting, other than in relation to spectrum management and the technical aspects of broadcasting;

Thus, we see two important areas where there is duplication and a little overlapping concerning copyrights and telecommunications.

As for copyrights, it has to be either a chance mishap that should be corrected without delay or a deliberate decision. If it is a deliberate decision, it is very tendentious and significant to entrust the Department of Industry with the whole issue of copyrights.

(1810)

Everybody knows, since they have their own personal culture, that when you delegate a question like copyrights to the Department of Industry, you are going against a whole culture. Just as a business has a culture, a department has one, and in this case it is a business culture.

Writers were familiar with the Department of Communications which was the organization previously responsible for everything pertaining to "Canadian" culture. These people, in Canada and Quebec, were in the habit—a good habit—of dealing with people who understood their problems and with whom they had probably established relationships.

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Now, the government supports the Conservative Party's approach of treating copyrights like any other commercial product; this approach was condemned in English Canada as well as in Quebec. We have information on the subject. The whole situation gives rise to so much unease, discomfort and unfairness that it strains the relationship between the artistic community and the Canadian government, as represented by the Department of Industry.

But even worse, we must know that Industry Canada is beholden to American interests, and this is part of the international problem. That was the case with the Conservative Party and the Liberal Party, in spite of all its pretensions, is no better. It seems that the arts community feels very affected by the situation. For reasons of efficiency and respect for individuals and organizations in the field, bringing the whole issue of copyrights back under the responsibility of the Department of Canadian Heritage has been suggested.

The other aspect concerns communications and telecommunications. There is a lot of duplication and it is very tendentious and revealing. And again, form is favoured over substance. The tools used in the world of telecommunications today are very sophisticated, whether we are talking about optical fibres or coaxial cables, and it is the tools that are the government's main concern.

The Department of Canadian Heritage deals with communications and telecommunications, but it has to take into account the business concerns of Industry Canada. When we say that Industry Canada is beholden to American interests, it is important to know that, according to the information we have, the situation has completely changed in the United States, which means that the cultural sovereignty of both Canada and Quebec is at stake.

There was a time when the Americans' own market was enough to meet their financial needs. They just had to export part of their output to cover their costs and make profits. Today, they have to export a lot more because production costs have become excessively high, as we can see in the world of sports for example.

That is why the cultural pressures from the United States that we have always felt since the Second World War have become even greater over the past few years. Today, the Americans have no choice. This is very serious for us in Quebec, and maybe even more serious for English Canada.

In Quebec, as far as cultural sovereignty is concerned, we, the sovereignists, are in the process of settling the matter. We are taking steps so that the issue of Quebec cultural sovereignty, as well as its full sovereignty, could be settled in a matter of eight to ten months.

But the situation is not the same as far as the cultural sovereignty of Canada is concerned. Instead of putting sovereignists on trial here in this House, if members opposite do not realize that the cultural sovereignty of Canada itself is threatened because of the overpowering influence of telecommunications, they will soon have to deal with problems of great magnitude.

(1815)

On the week end—as luck would have it—I was listening to a public affairs program of an economic nature, dealing precisely with cultural development. They were saying that Toronto, which had fallen on hard times because of problems in real estate and because of the recession, seems to be recovering much strength, thanks mostly to the cultural sector. Toronto is indeed regaining its demographic and economic weight because of billion-dollar developments in that area. So much so that Toronto has become the third largest cultural city in North America, after Los Angeles and New York, but it is Toronto, American style.

That is a problem people across the way should be concerned about because they face a giant that will smother whatever is left of the distinct personality Canada claims it has. I hate to think what would happen if Quebec decided to go its own way. We are playing our role as the Official Opposition when we tell Canadians that they should shape their own future the same way Quebecers will, shortly.

Since we are talking about broadcasting, telecommunications and communications, I would be remiss in my duty as the member for Trois-Rivières if I did not mention the recent decision broadcasters in Quebec made, almost arbitrarily, it would appear, or at least without notice or with very little consultation, to close down six AM radio stations overnight. I am dismayed to see this happen, and I want my constituents in Trois-Rivières to know it. I already had an opportunity to comment on those radio station closures.

Such a decision raises two concerns. One is the media concentration in Quebec and the attendant curtailing of freedom of expression through various channels. As a result of that concentration, those who work in the media will have to abide by their code of ethics even more strictly in order to do their work properly.

At noontime, the Minister of Canadian Heritage rejected all responsibility. We could very well blame the CRTC or question its decision to grant too many new FM licences, because those new stations slowly but surely eroded the advertising revenues the AM stations depended on. We now see the results of this laxism.

Lastly, in the communications sector, there is also the electronic highway which, likewise, has a commercial aspect. The vehicle is given much more importance than the content and Quebec is completely excluded. This responsibility is assigned

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to Industry Canada. In Quebec, however, Mr. Parizeau recently assigned it to his Minister of Culture. I believe that is the right way to go about it and Canada takes a different approach to government, which is not necessarily sound.

I would like to conclude on the fundamental question of what pertains to Heritage Canada. We can argue that one activity should come under this jurisdiction or that another activity should under that jurisdiction, but for us, as sovereignists, Heritage Canada is a major tool of a supposedly profitable federalism, a major tool for the assimilating Quebecers or attempting to assimilate them and intrude in a field which clearly is in provincial jurisdiction, especially in Quebec, where it should come under the sole jurisdiction of the Quebec government. All the money for Quebec administered by Heritage Canada should be given to the Government of Quebec, as soon as possible.

Therefore, I support the amendment presented by my colleague from Rimouski—Témiscouata.

(1820)

Mr. Patrick Gagnon (Parliamentary Secretary to Solicitor General): Mr. Speaker, I thought the hon. member's comments were most interesting. There was some discussion of the technical aspects, since according to him, copyright should be patriated from Industry Canada to Culture Canada, and I thought that was very interesting.

However, according to his last comments, the role played by federalism, Culture Canada, the CBC, Telefilm Canada, the National Film Board and all agencies concerned with promoting French Canadian culture in Montreal and Quebec is an attempt at assimilation. I think that is strong language that does not reflect the real situation at all, because I explained in the House—and I got no reaction—that 40 per cent of the films produced by the National Film Board were French. I think that is a very real aspect of our Confederation.

Again, I got no reaction when I said that the National Film Board and Telefilm Canada largely subsidized Falardeau's last film about the October crisis. I asked them if they could find an instance in which France provided funding for a Corsican or Breton nationalist to produce a similar film. I believe that the role played by the government reflects a wide-ranging, generous and comprehensive approach, and the maturity and confidence to consider the views of the opposition, as we are doing today.

We are still discussing the pervasiveness of American culture in our cultural industries. Sure. It is a fact of life that we, a nation of 6 million francophones, are like an island in a sea of anglophones. Incidentally, I was interested in the references to France, a country which I know fairly well. In 1984, when

people went to the cinema in France, more than 70 per cent of the films they saw were French productions. Unfortunately, today, only 30 per cent of the films seen by French movie goers are French productions. It is clear that France has lost control of its national production, while we in Quebec, thanks to the generous participation of the federal government, have been able to produce quality films and support French Canadian songwriters and composers.

I am thinking of Canadian productions like Roch Voisine and Céline Dion, good singers all of them. The Canadian government has also helped small producers who were not a big international success and who were not a big success in the United States. I do not think these small producers really have to go and produce in the United States. We are here to encourage them to develop French culture in Quebec and Canada and to provide them with a market, not only in this country but also internationally.

Today, unfortunately, the opposition failed to take this opportunity to recognize that the federal government, thanks to its grant system and participation, has been a major factor in the growth and development of Quebec culture.

Mr. Rocheleau: Mr. Speaker, I am very happy to see the member for Bonaventure—Îles-de-la-Madeleine is adopting that point of view on the issue because if, in their longing for sovereignty, there is one area where Quebecers can be proud and sure of themselves, surely it is the arts. The very existence of Telefilm Canada means there is great talent in Quebec.

(1825)

We saw it again, yesterday evening, during the Gala des Géméaux: we had the opportunity to celebrate dozens of people who make us sincerely and spontaneously proud and who are part of our own. I think this is an element on which Quebecers will have to base their judgment; the ability in arts and sports of this small group perched in the northern part of North America. Recently at the Olympic Games, we showed the world how good we were. And we showed it also in the economic sector with Québec Inc. We can be sovereign in all areas; we can take our fate into our own hands and take the necessary steps to reach full development.

I think we owe nothing to the Canadian government because the help we received from Telefilm Canada and other agencies was due to the presence of talented francophones who were appointed there and had the insight to see talent and promote it with taxes paid by Quebecers.

[English]

Mr. Lee Morrison (Swift Current—Maple Creek—Assiniboia): Mr. Speaker, I would like to pursue a little further the member's expressed concerns about the invasion of American

culture which might overwhelm all of Canada including his province, according to his thesis.

I really wonder if he believes that in an independent Quebec in the English cultural sea which the hon. member opposite mentioned they could hope to resist these forces without the protection, care and nurturing that French Canadian culture gets outside of Quebec? This is the buffer zone and we pay for it. We westerners pay for it at enormous cost.

I do not say I like it, but it is happening. I think the hon. member should be duly grateful.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Rocheleau: Mr. Speaker, I just want to go over the things that could threaten the Quebec culture and the Canadian culture, if it exists, because I really think there remains some doubts about that in some circles. In Quebec, in part for historical reasons, we are in a process of taking over our own destiny and making sure that our culture, which is unique in the world, will survive and develop.

It seems that the same cannot be said of the Canadian culture and that the Canadian stakeholders have not yet understood how critical the situation is. It is high time, given the communications systems in place today and the American domination over this small country which is Canada, north of the United States, and what will be left of it after Quebec separation, that these people take their future in hand and understand how critical the situation is. For us, as far as the francophones outside Quebec are concerned, we are going to take care of them like people of the diaspora and perhaps we will demand more than provincial and federal governments do today. We could cite the example of the anglophone minority and the other minorities in a sovereign Quebec and legitimately demand that the rest of Canada be as generous as we are.

Mrs. Suzanne Tremblay (Rimouski—Témiscouata): Mr. Speaker, I appreciated a lot the comments of my colleague from the Reform Party. It is a bit disappointing to see that the debate is getting out of hand. We have clearly stated our positions, we have said that we are against that bill for very fundamental reasons and all day long, members of the government kept on rising to tell us again and again how wonderful our country was, how beautiful and how great it was. Both Telefilm and the National Film Board make lots of films.

The National Film Board no longer has the money to make films and this is no secret. It makes films like *Léolo*. When Telefilm Canada makes a film like *Octobre*, it is not investing in the culture of Quebec, but an historical event that took place in Canada, in October 1970. Who is the one who introduced the War Measures Act? It is Trudeau. Who caused us to make that movie? Who sent the army to Montreal? The army, that is Canadian for sure. Thus, even if the event took place in Montreal, it is Canadian. We must never forget that. It is not

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because Telefilm Canada gives money to Quebec to make films, it also gives money to Toronto. We have never denied that cultural aspect. However, we are sick and tired of hearing people talk all day long about how beautiful Canada is while those same people will not admit that this department is going to divide our country instead of unifying it.

ADJOURNMENT DEBATE

(1830)

[*English*]

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 deemed to have been moved.

LOW LEVEL FLIGHTS

Mr. Len Taylor (The Battlefords—Meadow Lake): Mr. Speaker, last week I raised the question of the federal environmental assessment panel investigating a proposal to expand low level military flight training in Labrador, specifically flying over the territorial land of the Innu.

In asking the question I noted that all the public interest groups, including the Innu and the Sierra Club, have withdrawn from the hearings, rendering the process nothing short of a farce. The public has demonstrated by withdrawing from the process a lack of confidence in that process.

I asked the minister what the federal government would do to fix this so that the public and the most disadvantaged group in the area, the Innu, could participate.

Since the question, the Minister of the Environment has met with representatives of the Innu people and with Mr. Paul Wilkinson, a former and recently resigned member of the assessment panel in question. At that meeting and in a letter, Mr. Wilkinson said: "I was forced to conclude that I had outlived my usefulness on the panel when the chairman was effectively telling me that my opinion as a member of the panel carried less weight than that of the Department of National Defence".

The issue of the panel's bias is only one reason why the Innu and others are justifiably not participating in the hearings. According to the Innu, the panel seriously compromised the integrity and independence of the process when it failed to require the Department of National Defence to table critical information before the start of the public hearings so that it could be reviewed by the interveners.

The panel also prejudiced the hearing process by not requiring DND to provide an analysis of the impact of low level flight training on aboriginal rights, including the negotiation and settlement of land rights in Quebec and Labrador.

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The Innu requested the right to cross examine DND technical experts but they were denied by the panel. They are therefore saying that they cannot participate in a hearing process in which their land, their lives, the environment around them and their rights are at stake but in which the proponent is not required to put information on the table or stand accountable for other information that is in question.

The Minister of the Environment has heard the arguments and has indicated that mediation may be needed to make the hearings more fair and visibly impartial.

I once again ask that the federal government suspend the flights and suspend the hearings until the Innu rights and concerns are addressed and that after addressing those rights with or without mediation the federal government put in place an independent environmental review process that is fair both to the Innu and the land in question.

The minister has indicated in other places that Canada's new environmental assessment legislation may be proclaimed within two weeks. That new legislation sets out a process that may be fairer. Perhaps the minister would suspend the present hearings until what we know as Bill C-13 is proclaimed and then establish a new panel under the auspices of the new agency and do things right for a change.

Mr. Jesse Flis (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Foreign Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his intervention on the low level military flying activities in Labrador and Quebec.

The Minister of the Environment met recently with representatives of the three native groups who have decided not to participate to hear firsthand their concerns with the panel's review procedures.

The minister listened very carefully to their views. She respects their perspective but considers that the panel is con-

ducting its proceedings fairly and in accordance with its mandate and the long tradition of independent federal environmental assessment hearings.

The minister has stated in this very Chamber that if she is presented with any evidence of bias on the part of any panel member she would not hesitate to remove that member. However, to date there is no evidence of any bias among the panel membership. The panel will hear from those who are interested in participating in a process that is important to the government's decision making on this issue.

The participation of the First Nations and Inuit among others is an important aspect of the public review process. The member will be happy to know that the panel has indicated its willingness to be flexible in its procedures and in responding to the interests of key stakeholders.

Thus far there has been valuable participation of stakeholders, including First Nations and Inuit representatives, in the review process. It would be unfortunate if important groups continued to choose not to participate but no group or individual can be forced to be part of this open process.

The panel has received substantial written information from the groups that will not be participating in the hearings and will be using that information to the extent possible. The government encourages all affected groups and individuals to participate in the public hearings and I hope I can count upon my colleagues to also urge all affected groups to participate rather than to abstain.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): Pursuant to Standing Order 38(5), the motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m. pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 6.36 p.m.)

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