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Friday, October 28, 1994

Speaker: The Honourable Gilbert Parent

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Friday, October 28, 1994

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayers

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

SPLIT LAKE CREE FIRST NATION FLOODED LAND ACT

The House proceeded to the consideration of Bill C-36, an act respecting the Split Lake Cree First Nation and the settlement of matters arising from an agreement relating to the flooding of land, as reported (without amendment) from the committee.

Hon. Arthur C. Eggleton (for the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development) moved that the bill be concurred in.

(Motion agreed to.)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): When shall the bill be read the third time? By leave, now?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Mr. Eggleton (for the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development) moved that the bill be read the third time and passed.

Mr. Harbance Singh Dhaliwal (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise to address the House on third reading of Bill C-36, the Split Lake Cree First Nation Settlement Agreement Act.

I begin by thanking hon. members on behalf of the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development for supporting the bill at second reading and in committee. I would also like to thank the negotiators and all the people who participated in the negotiations.

(1005)

This is neither a complex nor a controversial piece of legislation. It has been developed through extensive consultations with all parties that will be affected by it and is supported by them.

Bill C-36 is concise and direct. Despite its brevity it is important. For the Government of Canada the proclamation of Bill C-36 will mean a release from any other further claims by the Split Lake Cree First Nation under the northern flood agreement.

More important, it will mean that we are fulfilling our commitments to this First Nation. It will allow us to begin to build a new partnership with this First Nation, a partnership based on trust, respect and understanding for the people of the Split Lake Cree communities.

Bill C-36 means they can now realize the full benefits of the northern flood settlement agreement. Most elements of the agreement are already being implemented and, as a result, the Split Lake Cree are building a better and more secure future for themselves.

To fully appreciate Bill C-36 we must first acknowledge that the people of the Split Lake, Cross Lake, Nelson House, Norway House and York Factory First Nations in northern Manitoba paid a high price for the northern flood agreement. The flooding of 4,800 hectares of reserve lands by the Churchill River diversion projects of Manitoba Hydro deprived many families and communities of access to their traditional hunting, gathering, harvesting and fishing areas. It occurred with little consideration to the needs or rights of these people.

A quarter of a century later the Government of Canada cannot turn back the clocks. However we can and must respect the commitments that have been made to the First Nations concerned. One way we will do that is by seeking parliamentary approval and royal assent for Bill C-36.

As hon. members are aware, the governments of Canada and Manitoba, as well as Manitoba Hydro, have attempted through the northern flood agreement of 1977 to provide compensation to these nations. In addition to cash compensation the agreement contained provisions for land management, resource development, community infrastructure, navigation and so on. It also provided for the appointment of an arbitrator to deal with the claims arising under the agreement.

Unfortunately the northern flood agreement is vague or silent on many key issues. As a result it has been very difficult to implement. It has led to frustration and excessive costs for the parties involved as it encourages arbitration rather than co-operation.

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The two governments and Manitoba Hydro have therefore been pursuing settlement agreements with individual bands based on a common set of principles and objectives.

Bill C-36 arises from such an agreement with the Split Lake Cree First Nation, the first and only band specific settlement agreement negotiated to date. The Split Lake Cree agreement was reached in June 1992. It fulfilled all outstanding obligations of the Government of Canada to the First Nation pursuant to the northern flood agreement.

As I mentioned a moment ago, the agreement is already being implemented with no significant problems. It is providing additional financial compensation to the Split Lake Cree. As well, it is providing for the transfer of certain lands to the First Nation, the creation of two new reserves, and increased socio-economic opportunities for the Split Lake Cree.

The government made a commitment in the agreement to entrench several of its provisions in legislation. This is what we are endeavouring to achieve with Bill C-36.

Specifically Bill C-36 implements four provisions of the agreement, all of which stand to benefit both the First Nation and the government. First it will remove any administrative responsibility the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development might have for moneys paid under the Split Lake agreement. By stipulating that these are not Indian moneys under the Indian Act, this in turn will give the First Nation far greater control over the funds which will be managed on its behalf by a trustee.

(1010)

Bill C-36 will also ensure that provincial crown lands provided in fee simple title as a result of the settlement agreement will not become special reserves under sections 35 and 36 of the Indian Act.

The First Nation will thus control the use and management of these lands without interference from the government and without the restrictions of the Indian Act. From the government's perspective this clause means the department will not have responsibility for these lands.

Bill C-36 will also address the costly and cumbersome dispute resolution process set out in the northern flood agreement. Individual band members can continue to make certain claims against Manitoba Hydro, but the simplified adjudication process set in the Split Lake Cree settlement agreement will take precedence over the process included in the northern flood agreement.

Finally, Bill C-36 ensures that the Government of Canada can utilize the Manitoba Arbitration Act when matters are in dispute under the northern flood agreement with regard to the Split Lake Cree First Nation. Currently Canada is the only party to the

agreement that does not have access to these arbitration mechanisms.

As I indicated a moment ago, five First Nations were affected by the Churchill River diversion projects and are therefore eligible to receive benefits under the northern flood agreement. However Bill C-36 applies to only one of those First Nations, the Split Lake Cree, since it is the only First Nation that has signed a band specific settlement agreement. I am hopeful that negotiations with the remaining First Nations will be successfully concluded in the future.

It is important hon. members understand that Bill C-36 does not give force to the Split Lake Cree Settlement Agreement, as the agreement is already being implemented. It does not place a new burden on the government but simply ensures that we live up to our commitment as set out in the agreement. The passage of Bill C-36 will have a significant impact on the members who make up the Split Lake Cree First Nation.

The goal of the minister responsible for this challenging portfolio is to make a difference in aboriginal and northern communities and to give families and individuals both the hope and the tools for a brighter and better future.

I urge hon. members to join me in pursuing that goal. Bill C-36 is an important element of the legislative agenda of the government for aboriginal people. It deserves the support of the House so that it can be referred to the other chamber at the earliest possible date.

[*Translation*]

Mr. André Caron (Jonquière, BQ): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to address the House to support, on behalf of the Official Opposition, Bill C-36, an Act respecting the Split Lake Cree First Nation and the settlement of matters arising from an agreement relating to the flooding of land in Manitoba.

I would like to start by putting the bill into context, because what happened in northern Manitoba in connection with the construction of a hydro-electric project on lands traditionally held by aboriginal communities has had a major impact on these communities. It is also an object lesson for our governments and people in the south, who failed to give these issues the consideration they deserved.

The events took place in the seventies in northern Manitoba and involved a Manitoba Hydro hydro-electric project.

(1015)

I may add that in a number of other areas in Canada, and especially in Quebec at the time, there were plans to develop hydro-electric power on several rivers in the north. The people of Quebec will remember that at the time, an agreement was negotiated with the Cree in connection with the James Bay hydro-electric development project. I will come back to this later on in my speech.

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The purpose of the project that concerns us today, was to develop hydro-electric power on the Churchill and Nelson Rivers. It was an enormous project. It involved diverting about 85 per cent of the waters of the Churchill River to the Nelson River. It included the construction of dikes, dams, channels and hydro-electric power stations. This altered the rate of flow in the affected waterways, immense reservoirs were built, and lake water levels changed.

The communities that lived on these lands traditionally lived along the waterways that provided means of transportation, their livelihood and food in the form of fish, so their whole environment was disrupted. In my region in the twenties, we had a similar development that affected the Lac-Saint-Jean when hydro-electric dams were built to form a reservoir for the Île Maligne power station.

The shores of the Lake Saint-Jean were flooded. A few years ago, a local filmmaker, who I believe worked for the National Film Board, produced a documentary called *La tragédie du Lac Saint-Jean*. What we are about to discuss this morning in connection with the development of hydro-electric power in northern Manitoba is similar to this situation. I think some tragic events took place, and I think that is something we should not forget.

The territory involved in the hydro-electric development project in northern Manitoba is immense, covering more than 250,000, and perhaps as much as 300,000, square kilometres. Manitoba Hydro invested a total of nearly \$3 billion in this project. Nearly 18 billion kilowatt-hours of electricity are produced, with sales estimated at between \$5 million and \$6 million annually. This enormous project will probably be of great benefit to Manitoba. Hydro-electric power is a source of wealth, and it is one of the cleanest sources of electric power, but although it has been of great benefit to Manitoba, the project has been a tragedy for the five First Nations living on the shores of the Nelson River.

These are the Cross Lake, the Nelson House, the Norway House, the York Factory and the Split Lake First Nations. The bill before the House this morning is specific to the Split Lake nation. Altogether, about 10,000 Cree status Indian living on these five reserves were affected. The hydro-electric development project flooded about 11,800 acres of land on the reserves or more than 10 per cent of their territory. The lands that were flooded were those that had been traditionally and continuously occupied, being, as I said earlier, those located along the waterways which served as a means of communication with the outside world.

(1020)

Before the development of hydroelectricity, the traditional way of life of native people was what they had known from time immemorial. It was similar to the way they lived at the begin-

ning of the century. They relied on federal assistance as they should, since they were entitled to it under the treaties they had signed, but mainly they relied on hunting, fishing and trapping for their livelihood.

And then, progress came from the south and disrupted everything. As you can imagine, with the start of huge projects and the arrival of southern workers living in camps and coming into contact with people on the reserves, the native way of life was bound to change. But the biggest change was the disruption of the ecosystem brought about by the dams. There was a change in the ecosystem of the Churchill and Nelson rivers as well as of neighbouring lakes and lakes which are merely wider parts of the river.

The water regime changed. In some places, the water flow dropped dramatically, while in others it rose sharply to the point of submerging banks.

Obviously, it has had an impact on the local plant and animal life. Hunting, fishing and trapping activities have been disrupted. Trapping often depends on water levels. Animals, such as beavers, live in streams and when you change the ecosystem, you disrupt their way of life and they must move or modify their habits. Thus traditional trapping, hunting and fishing grounds have been greatly altered.

Infrastructures such as wharfs and camps which had been used from time immemorial were lost. We often reflect on what the impact has been in the summer, but during the winter, people used to snowshoe across frozen lakes and rivers. Dams have changed the water flow and water level in streams. When you open the gates, the water level goes down and people can no longer walk on the ice as they have always done. Thus, even in the winter, their way of life has been greatly disrupted.

The most dramatic changes can be seen in the local native peoples' way of life. To start with, they have suffered a loss of income. Those who used to live from hunting, fishing and trapping have seen their income drop. The cost of living went up. Workers came in from the south, bringing along new products and introducing new habits among natives. All this meant an increase in the cost of living. Goods went up in price because people could not rely as much on hunting, fishing and trapping for their livelihood. They were forced to buy food, but at higher prices because everything had to be shipped from the south.

There was also a transformation of their mental and physical environment, in other words, their quality of life suffered. For generations they had lived next to a given river, they had particular activities, they recognized the landscape. Oral tradition had given rocks or places particular significance. When the land was flooded, a lot of significant landmarks were lost. Just think of our feelings when, by chance, we go through the village or the street where we grew up 40, 50 or 60 years ago. We know

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it is the same place, we recognize a few things, but we realize that the environment has changed.

(1025)

For the native peoples of the North affected by the harnessing of the Churchill and Nelson rivers, the environment changed suddenly. They no longer recognized their rivers, their lakes. They could no longer find the places where their people used to gather and live as a community. A part of their culture had been flooded at the same time as the river banks and the lake shores.

Yet, these people had rights. At that time we were not talking about rights entrenched in the Constitution, because this happened in the early 1970s in Manitoba. But these people had treaty rights, under Treaty No. 5, signed and negotiated with the federal government by their ancestors. Since they had rights over this land, it was to be expected that they would be entitled to compensation for losses incurred and that measures would be taken to help ensure decent living conditions on their ancestral land.

Of course it may have been less trouble for some people if these people had migrated south. Many wonder why one would want to live on ancestral land, when economic activity is difficult and everything is so expensive in these remote, northern areas; transportation costs in particular are astronomical. So, it would make things much easier if everybody just moved down south. But that is not what our country is about. That is not how we operate in Quebec and in Canada. Quebec and Canada are areas, land that was developed over the years by our fathers and forefathers, land on which we want to continue to live.

I can understand that aboriginal peoples of the north, be it Northern Quebec or Northern Manitoba, want to live in dignity on their own land. The issue of regional development was debated extensively in my region, the Saguenay—Lac—Saint—Jean region. People want to continue to develop this land. They want to live on this land. They want their children to find work there and the community as a whole to prosper.

These are requests often made to governments. People ask: "Give us the means to live on this land of ours". I can understand full well the situation of native peoples from Northern Manitoba who have seen their land altered, but wish to continue living in dignity on that land.

An agreement was to be concluded between interested parties. These interested parties are the five native peoples, Manitoba Hydro, as the financial backer of this project, the Province of Manitoba, which owns the Crown lands, and the government of Canada, as trustee for the natives affected, under the Indian Act.

It all started, as I said earlier, in the early 1970s. In 1968, Manitoba Hydro received a licence from the provincial govern-

ment to develop the northern territory covered by the Churchill and Nelson Rivers.

In 1972, Manitoba Hydro decided to go ahead. There was, of course, a debate among the population at that time. The Natives argued that they had rights. Some people more sensitive to environmental considerations also took part in the debate. There was a good discussion.

The licence was granted in 1968 and Manitoba Hydro decided to go ahead in 1972. In 1974, the Department of Indian Affairs got involved, some four or five years after the project was initiated. The Department of Indian Affairs assumed its responsibilities and ruled that, under Sections 28 and 35 of the Indian Act, the project could not be carried out without the agreement of the bands concerned.

(1030)

The federal government, which had a responsibility in this regard, finally notified everyone involved that the agreement of Native peoples had to be secured.

In 1975, negotiations began between the federal government, the province, Manitoba Hydro and the five nations represented by the Northern Flood Committee. This committee had represented Native people since 1974. Representatives from each nation had formed a committee to negotiate with Manitoba Hydro, the Province of Manitoba and the federal government.

Negotiations took place and, in 1977, the Manitoba Flood Agreement was signed. In other words, an agreement was reached in 1977 and the First Nations concerned agreed that the project could go forth. At that time, compensation was provided for flooded lands, for lost community infrastructure and for the loss of hunting and fishing rights. Steps were to be taken to ensure fair treatment for the Native people affected. That was the agreement.

Unfortunately, as the representative of the Minister of Indian Affairs said before me, this agreement was vague on certain points. Some matters were not settled and too many issues were poorly resolved or negotiated, so that the agreement could not be implemented.

The most contentious points that were put on the back burner concerned adding lands to the reserves to replace the flooded lands or giving the first nations concerned other lands in return for the flooded lands.

Another point left in limbo was the employment of reserve members on building sites. One would have thought that with the building sites open in those regions, an adequate and rigorous policy would be in place to allow members of the First Nations concerned to work on hydro-electric projects if they wished to do so. The agreement was vague on this point.

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There was the whole issue of environmental monitoring. Land was flooded, so the plant and animal life were disrupted and we realize that there were surely environmental problems. The agreement contained no strict, specific measures for proper environmental monitoring. Of course, we are looking at it today from the vantage point of the 1990s and, in the 1970s, people may have been less sensitive. Today, when we think of all the environmental studies and precautions that an organization must take if it wants to proceed with hydro-electric development in the north, we realize that nothing was done in Manitoba in the 1970s or whatever was done was inadequate.

In my region, there was a hydro-electric development project on the Ashuapmushuan River. I say "was" because that project seems to have been abandoned for now. For seven or eight years, Hydro-Québec has been conducting studies, making public submissions, setting up review committees and boards to hear what the public thinks. Today we find it quite right and proper to protect the environment. That was not the case in northern Manitoba in the 1970s.

The agreement between the native peoples and Manitoba Hydro left this whole issue unresolved.

(1035)

Another important thing is that the agreement did not provide for a body to implement it. You might think that the committee of First Nations on the flooding of land in northern Manitoba would have dealt with this issue, but the agreement did not provide for any spending or an adequate amount to cover the costs. There should have been an auxiliary agreement to specify this, but no such agreement was ever concluded.

So in 1977, we had what I would call a bungled agreement that was very inadequate. The result was predictable. Implementing the agreement was a tragic failure for the Native people concerned. From 1982 to 1993, the Native people filed 174 applications for arbitration under the agreement. That is a huge number. It means that the Native people concerned had to fight inch by inch, make representations and file complaints with an arbitrator to enforce an agreement that they had signed in good faith. Of course, they are in a pitiful situation.

It is clear that for the Native people concerned, the project had very harmful consequences, as the Department of Indian Affairs has admitted. For example, in terms of the environment, the Department of Indian Affairs has admitted that some deterioration of commercial and recreational areas can be observed. I have spoken about it at length from the beginning. The department has also been able to observe an increase in mercury contamination. Those are waterways, and the presence of mer-

cury in water is very harmful to fish and to those who eat that fish.

It was noticed that the drinking water in some communities was contaminated, this in an area where water is found everywhere. In northern Manitoba, there are lakes, rivers and streams on much of the land, but some of the water used by Aboriginal people was contaminated. A reduction in the quantity and the quality of fish was noticed. The Department of Indian Affairs recognized that game and fish became scarce.

In 1992, the Auditor General examined the issue. I must admit that, since I come from Quebec, I did not have a very good grasp of the issue, but the problem has been discussed for years in Manitoba. In 1992, the Auditor General found that the Department of Indian Affairs, which had signed the agreement on behalf of Canada, had not done its duty regarding the environmental aspects of this project. The Auditor General told us that the department had not conducted an adequate preliminary environmental assessment, that it did not have a plan to monitor the environmental impact of the hydroelectric project, and that it did not present a report to the bands concerned on the implementation of the recommendations made in 1975 regarding the environment.

The Native peoples concerned had told the Department of Indian Affairs that the project had serious consequences. Recommendations had been made in 1975, but the department did not implement them. Aside from these environmental considerations, the agreement also included provisions on major concerns of Native peoples, but these were not implemented.

Canada did not fulfill its commitment to transfer some land to the reserves, in exchange for the land that was flooded. Seventeen years later, in 1993-94, only one per cent of the promised land had been transferred.

(1040)

Also, community development was never really promoted. Some initiatives were taken, as the parliamentary secretary said earlier, but little was done for community and economic development in those regions.

In 1980, a plan was developed to promote employment, health, transportation, housing and education. That plan was not implemented and, in spite of that, no monitoring process was devised to ensure its implementation.

Consequently, 20 years later we find ourselves with an enormous mess on our hands. Of course Hydro Manitoba is pleased: it generates electric power. The province is also pleased because it promoted its own economic development. The federal government was not seen to be particularly pleased, but then, during his speech earlier, the parliamentary secretary did express satisfaction that the bill before the House this morning

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will free the Department of Indian Affairs from some of its duties.

The fact remains that some people benefitted from all this, some people benefitted from this development, but so far it has not been the Natives living on these territories. Why? Because the proposed agreement was ill-conceived and there was no agency to implement it. This agency, as I mentioned earlier, should have been the committee that negotiated on behalf of the aboriginal peoples, that is the Northern Flood Committee, but since the agreement did not provide for its funding, we are without such an agency.

Moreover, in 1983, the judge presiding over some of these matters stated that if someone had wanted to strip the committee of all its duties, he would not have acted any differently. The best way to go about it was to provide no funding at all. We must realize that this committee was supposed to implement the agreement over a vast territory. This would have entailed permanent staff, management, transportation costs, legal costs for representation in court. In any case, it would have cost a lot of money. The agreement did not provide funding for this committee. I think it should have, but it did not.

A solution had to be found, so, 1986, the committee which had overseen the negotiations for the agreement and managed to survive, proposed a new round of comprehensive negotiations to settle all outstanding claims and to put an end to all these disputes. This was in 1986, six years after the Agreement was signed.

Three years later, in 1989, a new round of negotiations started. This is a very slow process. Admittedly, aboriginal people are patient but when they ask for negotiations and these negotiations only start three years later, somebody somewhere is not making all the efforts needed to solve the problem.

In July 1990, another settlement agreement was signed on outstanding land claims and obligations. Among other things, it was decided to transfer at least 834 square kilometres of Crown lands to the Indians concerned. Thus, a settlement agreement was signed that was going to be used as a kind of framework agreement for the negotiations embarked upon by the Aboriginal peoples, since each one of them is in a unique situation. All of them are not located along the same river. Their physical and economic conditions differ. Of course, each and every one of them wants negotiations that meet its own particular needs.

But the agreement signed in 1990 was supposed to be a framework agreement. In 1992, the Split Lake First Nation, the one mentioned in the bill before us this morning, apparently accepted a special agreement that stemmed from the proposed agreement. As for the four other nations, negotiations are still going on. At the present time, they negotiate on an individual basis with the authorities to reach agreements. There are sepa-

rate negotiations for each of the four nations. Was the intention to divide and conquer? If so, this was certainly successful.

(1045)

The agreement signed by the Split Lake Cree Nation provides particularly for some rule on the water level, meaning that the aboriginal people will be consulted and will have their say on water levels and flows. The agreement specifies which lands will have to be transferred by the Crown to the province of Manitoba for the reserves and for the native populations. The agreement provides for a partnership for resource management and planning for the use of traditional lands. The agreement provides for adequate environmental monitoring with a very active participation by the Cree. The agreement provides for the payment of certain amounts per capita and pensions to the elders. This is part of the compensation owed to the aboriginal peoples for the losses they incurred due to the hydro development project.

The agreement also specifies that the right of native populations to have access to regular government programs is not diminished because of the fact that they have received money under this agreement. If we take away their right to have access to regular government programs because of the money they have received, they will be as poor as they were before.

It is also expected that measures will be taken to ensure that members of the native community affected can find jobs at Manitoba Hydro and that business opportunities are created to help these populations revitalize the local economy.

The agreement also provides for an adequate arbitration mechanism. This is essential because nothing guarantees that this agreement will always be implemented to everyone's satisfaction. So there is a need for an arbitration mechanism.

There is also the possibility of opening a trust account to make money available to the native people so that they can manage this own development, for development purposes. All these measures may require fiscal commitments of \$15 million from the federal government and of \$4 to \$5 million from the province of Manitoba and Manitoba Hydro, as well as guarantees of some \$21 million from Manitoba Hydro. This means that money will be made available to the Cree to stimulate economic development in the area.

Now, you may ask, since an agreement has been reached, why do we have to study a bill on this agreement? The bill is designed to facilitate the settlement of matters arising from the Split Lake agreement.

Thanks to this bill, the aboriginal population of Split Lake will be able to receive directly the money owed to them. It will not have to go through the federal government. My party has frequently asked this government for amendments to the current legislation that many people would welcome. At present, money made available to Indian or Native nations must go through the Indian affairs department, which is responsible for the man-

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agement of that money. With this bill, the Split Lake population will get administrative control over the funds made available to them.

This bill also exempts from reserve land status certain federal lands to be transferred. That will give the Split Lake population better control over those territories. That also means less responsibility for the department.

(1050)

Native peoples will get better control, but, as a result, the department will have to assume lesser responsibilities as their trustee. What matters is that these peoples take charge of their own lives and that the trusteeship of the Indian affairs department gradually diminish.

The bill provides that the agreement takes precedence over the 1977 agreement. That agreement was bungled and ill-conceived. Therefore, the agreement the Crees signed in 1992 will have precedence over the clauses of the previous agreement that are not as clear.

There is also a dispute settlement mechanism under the Manitoba legislation. This means that people can be more easily summoned and that procedural rules are clearer and more restrictive for all parties.

Mr. Speaker, you can see from my speech that I have realized that there has been a hydroelectric development. The population has suffered because of that and should receive some kind of compensation. The Split Lake agreement signed in 1992 provides the population concerned with the means to look after its own development and the bill submitted to us will help that. That is the reason why the Bloc Québécois supports this bill in third reading.

However, some issues were raised when we heard witnesses at the Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs. The Bloc Québécois members sitting on this committee intend to suggest that the committee ask the minister that some of our recommendations be implemented in order that agreements with the other four nations now negotiating be reached.

We will ask that the committee negotiating that issue for Aboriginal people gets adequate funding to ensure proper service to the communities involved in future negotiations. We will ask that the federal government authorize anticipated payments or non-interest-bearing loans so that funds be given to people negotiating in order that they have immediate access to all the monies required for their economic recovery. And when other nations settle, the anticipated payments will be deducted from amounts due.

Perhaps we will also ask the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development to seriously consider reviewing the amounts the Split Lake nation settled for in the agreement reached if other communities should obtain much higher

amounts through negotiations. We must say that the Split Lake people are taking a risk under the circumstances. They are the first to sign and the others could get much more. Canada, the province of Manitoba and Hydro Manitoba will benefit from the fact that people in Split Lake want to take that risk, but I think they should not have to put up with negative consequences in the future because they were the first to accept.

We will also ask the committee to recommend that the Department of Indian Affairs ensure the continued use of environmental impact studies, and we want the federal government to see to it that the parties act in good faith during current negotiations with the four other nations.

(1055)

I am not accusing anyone, but I have the impression that in this process, especially in the case of the agreement signed in 1977, some people wanted to take advantage of the situation, and that the parties were acting in strict good faith.

Since my time is running out, I will start my concluding remarks.

The agreement before the House today is not a comprehensive agreement like those concluded in 1975 at James Bay, in 1984 on the Mackenzie, in 1990 in Yukon and in 1992 in Nunavut. This agreement concerns only one of the nations, but the philosophy is the same. In other words, faced with the fact that Aboriginal peoples were making claims and had rights in Canada, Canada and Quebec realized that it was necessary to have agreements in good faith involving aboriginal peoples and the various governments concerned.

In concluding, I may recall that the first agreement in this country was the agreement signed in Quebec with the James Bay Cree in 1975, while a side agreement was signed in 1978 with the Naskapi of Northeastern Quebec. It was the first significant and comprehensive agreement signed in Canada and was ratified in 1977 by an Act of Parliament.

Hon. members will recall that, at the time, the federal government's objective was to extinguish the aboriginal rights of all Indians who signed agreements. The Crees who signed the James Bay agreement relinquished their aboriginal rights to the lands concerned. These lands represented an immense territory of more than one million square kilometres, about 69 per cent of the territory of Quebec. This agreement was implemented.

I think Quebec can be proud of the fact that the agreement signed in the seventies by the Bourassa government was implemented by subsequent governments, including the Parti Québécois government headed by Mr. Lévesque. These agreements were entered into in good faith by the Crees and the Neskapis, the federal government, the province of Quebec and Hydro-Quebec. As far as I know, the parties concerned, have seen to it that the agreement is respected. I think it has been, to the satisfaction of all parties. Substantial amounts of money were

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made available to the James Bay Cree; their territorial rights are clear; they managed to organize a Native police force; there were proper environmental assessments. As far as health and education are concerned, Cree communities have been able to set up all the services they need and are in charge of running their own affairs.

In closing, I can say that my party intends to support Bill C-36. An injustice has been done to the Aboriginal peoples in Northern Manitoba, and I think it is the duty of the federal government to redress it. If Bill C-36 before the House today can be helpful in this respect, it will be a pleasure for us to support this bill.

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

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[English]

THE ECONOMY

Mr. Andy Mitchell (Parry Sound—Muskoka, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on numerous occasions during the past few weeks members of the Reform Party have included in their statements the amount the debt increases during the one minute they speak. Fair enough. Emphasizing the seriousness of our economic difficulties is important.

But members of the opposite party fail to tell the complete story and ignore some of the important disbursements the government will make. In the next minute, \$38,000 will be paid to seniors, \$28,000 will be transferred to the provinces to pay for medical services, \$15,000 will be disbursed to low income Canadians through the child tax and GST credits and \$29,000 of tax expenditures will be incurred to support retirement savings plans.

Unlike some members of the Reform Party we in the government are cognizant of our social responsibilities to individual Canadians. We intend to ensure that people do not die for lack of medical care, do not go hungry for lack of food and do not suffer from exposure for lack of housing.

As Liberals we intend to live up to all of our responsibilities.

[Translation]

COMMUNICATIONS SECURITY ESTABLISHMENT

Mr. Maurice Dumas (Argenteuil—Papineau, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister has refused to create an external control mechanism to monitor the questionable activities of the Communications Security Establishment. In so doing, he is going against the traditional position of the Liberal Party of Canada.

In fact, the Liberal members on the special committee reviewing the CSIS Act in 1990 recommended that the CSE be subject to outside control. We also remember that the former Liberal Solicitor General, Robert Kaplan, believed as well that informal administrative controls are no longer sufficient. A democratic, independent external control mechanism is required for the activities of the CSE. The Bloc Québécois believes that the government must make a parliamentary committee responsible for monitoring the CSE's activities.

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[English]

YOUNG OFFENDERS ACT

Ms. Margaret Bridgman (Surrey North, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, in 1992 in my riding of Surrey North a 16-year old boy named Jesse Cadman was murdered by Isaac Deas who at the time was a juvenile and on a court imposed curfew.

Since that tragedy Jesse's father Chuck has become very active in trying to change the Young Offender's Act. I have received over 1,000 letters from my riding expressing support for Chuck and his group CRY, or Crime, Responsibility and Youth.

Chuck's latest initiative is a lawsuit against the father of Isaac Deas and the crown for failing to enforce the court imposed curfew. Had that curfew been enforced, Jesse would be alive today.

I support Chuck Cadman in assigning responsibility to parents who seemingly have not made reasonable effort to exercise parental control. I support his effort to hold the crown accountable to those who are under its supervision in the community. I ask the Minister of Justice to make himself accountable to the Canadian public and heed the concerns of citizens like Chuck Cadman.

* * *

NATIONAL SLEEP AWARENESS WEEK

Ms. Mary Clancy (Halifax, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to remind the House that the week of October 23 to 29, 1994 has been designated National Sleep Awareness Week.

S. O. 31

[Translation]

Thousands of Canadians suffer from sleep/wake disorders. Sleep-Wake Disorders Canada meets the needs of people who have various sleep/wake disorders, from insomnia to diseases such as narcolepsy, excessive drowsiness and sleep apnea, where the person stops breathing several times during the night.

[English]

Sleep/Wake Disorders Canada is a national voluntary health organization devoted to helping people who suffer from sleep/wake disorders through the development of educational packages and the establishment of self-help groups in local communities across the country.

When we turn our clocks back at the end of this week, let us think of the difficulties some of our citizens have with various sleeping disorders and remember the efforts of Sleep/Wake Disorders Canada which sponsors National Sleep Awareness Week.

* * *

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Mr. Andrew Telegdi (Waterloo, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Waterloo area is a breeding ground for information technology entrepreneurs. There are currently 125 export oriented IT companies with a workforce of 5,500 in the Waterloo area. The current revenues are \$600 million annually. They project that by the year 2000 they could have a workforce of 25,000 to 30,000. These are highly paid, knowledge based, export oriented jobs.

Yesterday I had the pleasure to host in Ottawa 14 CEOs representing IT companies. They met with officials of the industry department and ministers of the government. Their message to government was clear: they are not looking for handouts or subsidies.

They stated that it was easier for them to sell their IT products to the United States government than to the Canadian government. They asked that in cases in which their product was superior and priced better than the U.S. products that the Canadian government buy Canadian made IT products.

The logic of their plea to us is inescapable and our procurement practices should reflect this.

* * *

COURT CHALLENGES PROGRAM

Mrs. Beryl Gaffney (Nepean, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this week the minister of heritage and the government reinstated at a modest cost the court challenges program. For those who are new to the House, the elimination of this program in 1992 was an example of the previous government's failure to protect the rights of disadvantaged Canadians.

(1105)

This program funds equality seeking groups and individuals who seek to use the charter to establish their legal and constitutional rights and yet who do not have the financial resources to challenge on their own.

By bringing injustices to court for judgment, the rights of all Canadians are defined and enforced.

The Liberals, true to their red book word, have lived up to their promise.

* * *

[Translation]

ETHICS

Mrs. Maud Debien (Laval East, BQ): Mr. Speaker, we wonder if the Liberals have not lost their red book somewhere between two phony consultations and three unkept commitments. But let us return to it anyway, to remind ourselves of their election promises.

Speaking of the importance of restoring public trust, the Liberals told us: "This erosion of confidence seems to have many causes: some have to do with the behaviour of certain elected politicians, others with an arrogant style of political leadership".

So on the first opportunity, the Liberal government and the Prime Minister gloss over an unpardonable indiscretion by a Cabinet minister. The Prime Minister casually rebuffs the Official Opposition which asks him to enforce the most basic rules of ethics. What has become of the Liberal promises? What has become of their principles?

* * *

[English]

LIBERAL GOVERNMENT

Mr. Dick Harris (Prince George—Bulkley Valley, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, our country is drowning in deficit and haemorrhaging in debt. Yet day after day the Liberals jump to their feet to proudly announce that Canada is the best country in the world to live in.

When one compares Canada with other countries in the world, there is no contest. Even if things were two or three times as bad in Canada it would still be the best country in the world to live in.

I would like to suggest a different test for the Liberals to ponder. Compare how Canada is now with all these problems and how it could be were it not for 25 years of irresponsible Tory and Liberal governments. That is the real test.

By the way, as of this morning our national debt stands at \$536,017,269,801.89. Shame on that irresponsible government.

S. O. 31

DENNIS SWEETING

Mr. John O'Reilly (Victoria—Haliburton, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Mr. Dennis Sweeting, a constituent of mine who was recently appointed a member of the Order of Canada for his outstanding contribution to the performing arts.

Mr. Sweeting who lives in Sunderland, Ontario has had and continues to have a busy and active life. He has been a professional actor since 1938. He is the founding director of the Kawartha Summer Theatre and he is the former president of the Association of Canadian Television and Radio Artists. He served on the municipal council of the town of Lindsay as reeve and was elected by his peers as warden of the county of Victoria.

Mr. Sweeting is a well known and respected citizen in the riding of Victoria—Haliburton and encourages the youth of our country to pursue their dreams as actors and playwrights.

I congratulate Dennis Sweeting on his appointment. He is truly an outstanding Canadian who has devoted his life to improving the world around him.

* * *

ELMER MACDONALD

Mr. Wayne Easter (Malpeque, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to rise today and congratulate a constituent who has been recently named to the Atlantic Agriculture Hall of Fame. For more than 20 years the hall of fame has honoured people who have contributed greatly to our society. This year's recipient is Elmer MacDonald of Hunter River, Prince Edward Island.

Mr. MacDonald reflects the excellent calibre of farmers Prince Edward Island produces. He started out nearly 50 years ago as a small dairy producer and today is the owner and operator of his own dairy processing company, Health Milk Company, employing 40 people.

Mr. MacDonald attributes his success not to any large corporate management but to his family and his staff which have co-operatively built his small dairy operation into a thriving island business. Mr. MacDonald's accomplishment is an example of how family farms contribute to the success of society as a whole.

Mr. MacDonald is an island farmer who has brought prosperity to his family, his workers and his community. I congratulate him on receiving this honour.

* * *

SOCIAL SECURITY REFORM

Mr. Stan Keyes (Hamilton West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, just the other night I conducted a town hall meeting in my riding of Hamilton West to gain some input on the social security review from my constituents.

I would like to thank everyone who attended the town hall that evening including my hon. colleague, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources Development.

(1110)

Several valuable messages emerged from that town hall meeting. Those who spoke agreed that the status quo is not acceptable. The Hamilton District Labour Council implored us not to rush the process. We were told not to place the burden of cost cutting on the backs of the poor and disadvantaged. Students at McMaster University asked us to work toward a more progressive tax system.

I encourage all my colleagues in the House to conduct consultations in their own ridings on the social security review.

* * *

[Translation]

MANPOWER TRAINING

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron (Verchères, BQ): Yesterday, Mr. Speaker, yet another voice joined in the chorus in support of the transfer of manpower training powers from Ottawa to the provinces.

Indeed, Mr. Thomas D'Aquino, chairman of the Business Council on National Issues, stated yesterday that such decentralization would be ideal; it would be good for the Canadian economy as well as for the work force as a whole.

The consensus that has been taking shape in Quebec these past five years, and that I referred to yesterday, now extends beyond these boundaries. After more than five years of debate, five years of explanation and frustration, Quebec's message is finally being heard in other parts of Canada, or so it seems.

The last group of people to convince, the slowest, most sclerotic one, which has been refusing to listen for five years now, is the federal government.

* * *

[English]

JUSTICE

Ms. Val Meredith (Surrey—White Rock—South Langley, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, on October 22, 2,000 people gathered in south Surrey to remember 16-year old Pamela Cameron. Pamela fell victim to a cold blooded murderer on October 4 who pulled her off a busy street at four o'clock in the afternoon. However, Pamela is only one of many victims. Pamela's parents, her boyfriend, relatives, friends and schoolmates grieve her death. The communities of Surrey, White Rock and Milton, Ontario share their loss.

Many other victims never even met Pamela. These are our children whose parents now feel compelled to drive them to and from school, teenagers who cannot leave their homes unescorted,

and children who cannot play outside unless an adult keeps an eye on them.

The death of Pamela Cameron claimed only one life but it has impacted on thousands. We will never be able to legislate the end of all murders but we have the ability to prevent many.

Now is the time to pass the necessary legislation. Rhetoric and promises are not acceptable. Canadians are demanding action now.

* * *

LIBERAL GOVERNMENT

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this being Friday I think it is the time to have a little good news to cheer us up for the weekend.

The statistics at the end of September indicate that the unemployment rate is down in Canada to 10.1 per cent. Three hundred and twenty-seven thousand jobs were created since this government was sworn into office. Sixty-six thousand more people are working this month than last month. The help wanted index was up by 14 per cent.

[Translation]

It is important to note that Angus Reid polls show the popularity of the Liberals at 57 per cent, confidence in the Prime Minister at 71 per cent, the popularity of the Liberal Party of Canada at 51 per cent in British Columbia, 48 per cent in Alberta, 61 per cent in Manitoba, and 68 per cent in Ontario.

* * *

[English]

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Mr. Mac Harb (Ottawa Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the former U.S. negotiator Carla Hill said last week that the North American free trade agreement should be expanded to include other Latin American countries such as Chile.

We agree. Protectionist walls around the globe must fall. Protectionist self-interest can be best served by the tremendous benefit that trade can generate.

The new GATT agreement will stimulate global trade by an additional \$755 billion U.S. over the next eight years. The global net income will increase by an additional \$500 billion by the year 2005.

For every \$1 billion in trade at least 10,000 Canadian jobs are created. United we stand.

Congratulations to both sides of the House for endorsing Canada's commitment to implement the World Trade Organization legislation. We expect our major trading partners to fulfil their commitment in time for January 1, 1995.

Oral Questions

CHILD CARE

Mr. Vic Althouse (Mackenzie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, last summer the 11 ministers of agriculture agreed to a set of rural initiatives which was to include a rural child care action plan. The department of human resources has apparently allocated something like \$720 million to provide some 150,000 child care spaces and so far there is no indication of how much of that will go to rural areas.

(1115)

I would appreciate it if the government and the minister in charge would give more consideration to the existing rural child care models. They are experimental.

Langruth, Manitoba has an active plan. This community of some 500 souls has provided a model of child care which goes beyond day care. It is working and needs special financing. It does not cost more than the other type but it needs recognition that the requirements are—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Calgary Southeast.

* * *

ETHICS

Mrs. Jan Brown (Calgary Southeast, Ref.): At first blush the 35th Parliament appeared like no other when 205 rookie MPs eagerly took their places in the House of Commons, unprecedented in any Canadian Parliament.

I am one of those rookies who ran on a platform that states: "We affirm that political parties should be guided by stated values and principles which are shared by their members and rooted in the political belief of Canadians. We believe in the accountability of elected representatives to the people who elect them".

Why is it today that I feel embarrassed as a member of this House when the honesty and integrity on which all of us supposedly ascribed to has been eroded? Public confidence in the politicians of this country will never be restored when inaction and imprudence creeps into the system.

As the hon. Prime Minister said in his throne speech: "Trust once shattered is difficult, almost impossible to rebuild".

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[Translation]

ETHICS

Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the Prime Minister told this House that he had been aware of the heritage minister's letter, the beginning of the month. Yet, we learned in today's *Ottawa Citizen* that ethics counsellor Howard Wilson said late Wednesday afternoon that he had never heard of the case.

Oral Questions

Did the Prime Minister consult the ethics counsellor and, if so, when?

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I did not speak to Mr. Wilson myself, but I asked that he be consulted yesterday.

Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, how can the Prime Minister explain to this House that he consulted the ethics counsellor only a few hours before the minister of heritage made his statement? Is this not an admission of how little importance he attaches to this counsellor's advice?

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, when I was informed of the minister's letter, I knew that Privy Council advisers had analyzed the problem and I was given a recommendation to that effect. I did not know whom they consulted. I was briefed on the various options. I knew that Mr. Sharp had been consulted and I thought that Mr. Wilson had been consulted, but that did not change the decision. The decision is still the Prime Minister's responsibility. The Prime Minister cannot say, "My counsellor advised me to do this or that". At the end of the day, the Prime Minister must take his responsibilities and that is what I did.

Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, it is ironic that, after making such a big fuss over the appointment of an ethics counsellor, they consult him only a few hours before a statement, probably to save face.

Given his party's ambitious commitments with regard to integrity and openness, does the Prime Minister not agree that the episode of the letter shows that his government is in no hurry to adopt clear guidelines for ministers, especially when dealing with quasi-judicial bodies?

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I checked the long-standing guidelines on this, and those concerning judges are very clear. They say that anyone who has a problem with the judiciary must go to the Minister of Justice. It is very clear that a minister cannot write or telephone a judge. Even when I was a minister, there were guidelines to the effect that one must go to the Minister of Justice, who must use his judgment.

(1120)

As for the guidelines for members of Parliament and ministers concerning quasi-judicial bodies, they say that there must be communications among these bodies, but after reading the guidelines yesterday, I concluded that they were not clear enough and I ordered that new ones be prepared.

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

After a series of failures, including the Ginn Publishing episode, the avowed helplessness of the minister to adequately protect the interests of French-speaking people living outside Quebec, and now his refusal to resign following his blunder with the CRTC, the minister no longer has any credibility.

At a time when the government is about to slash his budget, what credibility does the minister think he still has to protect the interests of Canadian cultural institutions and industries?

Hon. Michel Dupuy (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I assume my responsibility to all Canadians who expect me to look after their interests, including those of cultural communities.

Mrs. Suzanne Tremblay (Rimouski—Témiscouata, BQ): Mr. Speaker, does the minister not think that, given his poor record and his inability to deal with several major issues, he would have served the interests of Canadians better by resigning yesterday, as he was asked to do?

Hon. Michel Dupuy (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the answer is no.

[English]

Miss Deborah Grey (Beaver River, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Prime Minister said that he had learned of the letter to the CRTC from the Minister of Canadian Heritage at the beginning of the month of October and that he had consulted the ethics counsellor.

I draw the House's attention to yesterday's *Hansard* at page 7312 where the Prime Minister is quoted as saying:

I consulted the government's ethics counsellor and one I appointed for myself—

In light of those remarks I would like to ask the Prime Minister how he could say just a few moments ago that: "I did not speak to him myself. I asked that he be consulted". Further, how could he justify saying just a few moments ago: "I thought Mr. Wilson had been consulted". Why the discrepancy?

[Translation]

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, when you are Prime Minister, you have people working for you, preparing reports and discussing issues. Officials worked on this issue and then made recommendations.

As to the minister's letter, I was of the opinion that he had made a mistake, but when he realized that, he himself corrected the situation. I knew that the issue had been reviewed by lawyers from the Privy Council Office. These people do not come to see

me personally; I have an excellent Clerk of the Privy Council who keeps me informed.

I did receive the recommendation. I did not ask them to whom they had talked. The recommendation was made to the Prime Minister who is fully responsible.

[English]

The Prime Minister is fully responsible. With all the facts in front of me I said I think that the minister made an error in not being that careful but he tried to correct it as soon as he realized his error. I did not ask him to resign. Eventually I asked if Mr. Wilson had been consulted in the process. I have been told he was not. Therefore, I asked that he be consulted right away. He was consulted yesterday and he gave his advice. The advice he gave was given to me and it did not force me to change my mind about the decision I took a few days ago.

Miss Deborah Grey (Beaver River, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, this is not something we are dealing with just a couple of days ago. The ethics counsellor said that he was contacted on Wednesday night, not by the Prime Minister or his officials but by a Southam News reporter. This has been going on literally for months. According to the ethics counsellor he was only contacted Wednesday night. This is not good enough.

I ask the Prime Minister: Where are the reports and the minutes from this meeting with the ethics counsellor? Why can we not have all the facts for this? Will he table a report from the ethics counsellor with the facts?

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is not about that at all. I said that the Prime Minister is responsible. I was made aware of the problem. I looked at all the facts and I made the decision. I am fully responsible.

(1125)

If I were to make the wrong decision and then come into this House and say that I received advice from somebody telling me to do this or that you would have said: "You are the one responsible". I take full responsibility on that matter.

The Prime Minister can consult whomever he wants. At the end of the day when he gets up in this House he is the only person responsible. I am not running away from my responsibilities.

Miss Deborah Grey (Beaver River, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, that is exactly what we are asking for: absolute responsibility and accountability from every member in this Chamber.

Instead of establishing an independent ethics watchdog to investigate ministers and hold them publicly to account, the government has established an ethics lapdog that answers to nobody but the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister keeps him in the dark and employs him only when he is needed at the last minute to excuse the actions of an embattled minister.

Oral Questions

Will the Prime Minister stop dodging his responsibilities as he is proud to do and demand the resignation of the Minister of Canadian Heritage?

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I explained the situation yesterday. I said that it was an honest mistake. The minister recognized that himself and acted without pressure from anybody outside. When he realized it was interpreted like that and when checking the guidelines he realized he wanted to correct the situation and he wrote the letter. I was satisfied with that.

I would have preferred that he had not written the letter of course. But as I said, when you look at the facts it was not to influence a decision, it was to have a decision. When you look at the facts today the letter was written in relation to one applicant who did not get the permit. He lost it.

* * *

[Translation]

CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS

Mr. Roger Pomerleau (Anjou—Rivière-des-Prairies, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Canadian Heritage.

After weeks of waiting, the government will release today a series of studies on the future of its cultural institutions, for the sole purpose of justifying the major cuts it is about to make in that sector.

Does the Minister of Canadian Heritage realize that imposing major budget cuts to cultural institutions, such as the NFB, will only result in jeopardizing their integrity, and even the survival of an institution which is internationally recognized?

Hon. Michel Dupuy (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member thinks that the Minister of Canadian Heritage has made decisions concerning the future budgets of some federal cultural institutions. This is only an assumption.

What I did was to have these studies made public precisely so that people and institutions concerned can react. This is in total agreement with the government's desire for transparency in these fields.

Mr. Roger Pomerleau (Anjou—Rivière-des-Prairies, BQ): Mr. Speaker, does the minister endorse the recommendations contained in the Secor report on Telefilm Canada, to the effect that investments should be limited to presumably profitable ventures, from a commercial point of view, and does the minister realize that the implementation of such a recommendation would jeopardize the whole independent film production industry, thereby affecting young producers and original work?

Oral Questions

Hon. Michel Dupuy (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, if I had endorsed anything, it would mean that I would have already made decisions. My original answer indicates that I did not make any such decision.

* * *

[English]

ETHICS

Mr. Elwin Hermanson (Kindersley—Lloydminster, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, yesterday we were concerned about the judgment of the Minister of Canadian Heritage. Today we are concerned about conflicting statements by the Prime Minister who yesterday said: "I consulted. I consulted with the ethics counsellor". Today he is saying: "I asked somebody else to go and see him and see what he said". This is a discrepancy and I am very concerned.

The Mulroney government was not known for setting high standards but at least when it had a problem it was dealt with immediately. This Prime Minister has not.

I ask him to ask his minister to resign immediately and clear the air.

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, yes, I consulted. I asked somebody to call him to ask him the question. He gave a very clear answer. He did not speak to me directly. Most of the time I have a staff that consults with me because I have a lot of work to do. The answer that came from him did not lead me to change my mind about the decision I had made earlier in the month. I think it was October 1 and we are still in the month of October.

(1130)

Mr. Elwin Hermanson (Kindersley—Lloydminster, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, on page 95 of the red book, the Liberals promise and I quote: "to appoint an independent ethics counsellor that will report directly to Parliament". This is a broken promise made by the Prime Minister during the election campaign. The Prime Minister has said that he would be accountable for fulfilling every promise in the red book. This need not have happened. The Prime Minister would not be in this mess had he stood up and kept his own promises.

I ask the Prime Minister to give the ethics counsellor his independence, make him responsible to Parliament, and allow him to report directly to Parliament on this issue as he promised. Then he would not be in such a mess as he got himself into today.

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we debated that theory in the House at that time. We came to the conclusion that at the end of the day, whatever

advisers you have around you, when you are the Prime Minister you make the decision. Even if that adviser is to report to Parliament, I will have to decide whether I do or do not keep a minister in the cabinet. Nobody but the Prime Minister chooses a cabinet minister and is responsible for the cabinet.

The man does the advising but the decision remains the responsibility of the only one who is responsible for the cabinet, the Prime Minister of the country.

* * *

[Translation]

COPYRIGHT

Mr. René Laurin (Joliette, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Canadian Heritage. It is becoming more and more obvious that the delay in tabling the long-awaited bill on Phase II of the copyright law reform is attributable to the inability of the heritage minister to agree with his colleague, the industry minister, on the scope of the recognition of neighbouring rights.

Will the minister recognize that his industry colleague and himself hold completely opposite views on this issue and that his weakness and lack of credibility could well put him at a disadvantage vis-à-vis his colleague who is prepared to defend the interests of industry at the expense of creative artists?

[English]

Hon. John Manley (Minister of Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to respond to this question because it is based on a fundamentally incorrect premise, which is that the Minister of Canadian Heritage and I have some kind of disagreement over this issue.

The reality is that we have been working very closely together. We are ad idem on this. We intend to bring forward proposals to our cabinet colleagues in the very near future with respect to phase two of the copyright laws and we expect to see it enacted into law in the very near future.

[Translation]

Mr. René Laurin (Joliette, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I have another question for the Minister of Canadian Heritage. Will the minister confirm that the economic studies carried out by his department on neighbouring rights are complete? And for the sake of transparency, as he was saying a minute ago, can he tell us when exactly he intends to release these studies?

Hon. Michel Dupuy (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will make a decision after having completed my own analysis to determine whether they make a major contribution to the issue.

*Oral Questions**[English]***CRTC**

Mrs. Jan Brown (Calgary Southeast, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Canadian Heritage wrote a letter to the CRTC supporting the Daniilidis application on March 15. On March 29 the minister received a letter from the CRTC thanking him for, and I quote the secretary general of the CRTC: "Your letter of support for the application by Telemedia". The minister stated yesterday that having received the CRTC's letter he reacted quickly to remove the misunderstanding that had arisen.

The minister took six months to respond to this letter from the CRTC. For six months the CRTC was under the impression the minister was endorsing the Telemedia proposal.

(1135)

Does the Minister of Canadian Heritage consider his six month delay in responding to the CRTC a quick and efficient response to a matter of such importance and urgency?

Hon. Michel Dupuy (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I made a statement in the House yesterday which fully covers the point raised by my colleague.

Mrs. Jan Brown (Calgary Southeast, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, this minister has compromised the integrity of every member in the House. The minister's intervention has now tainted—

Some hon. members: No, no.

Mr. Young: Speak for yourself.

Mrs. Brown (Calgary Southeast): The minister's intervention has now tainted the CRTC decision regarding CHOM and Telemedia. In fact, both applications have been denied. How can the minister deny that his intervention did not influence both decisions?

Hon. Michel Dupuy (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our colleague does not seem to understand there has been no intervention. This was the subject of the discussion yesterday.

* * *

*[Translation]***AIR TRANSPORTATION**

Mr. Philippe Paré (Louis-Hébert, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Transport.

According to a Transport Canada inspection report, there were major irregularities in the maintenance control system for aircraft owned by Royal Aviation Inc. The report even mentions that Royal operated aircraft that would not have received an airworthiness certificate if they had been inspected at the time.

What explanation does the minister have for the fact that an air carrier can operate aircraft without an adequate maintenance control program, and what does he intend to do to ensure passenger safety?

Hon. Douglas Young (Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the issue raised by the hon. member is a very important one. The Department of Transport is responsible for ensuring passenger safety in all public transportation, and I can assure the hon. member that I will look into the situation he described, because we cannot afford to leave any doubt as to the quality of the inspections that are made and the carrier's responsibility to know and abide by all the regulations issued by my department.

Mr. Philippe Paré (Louis-Hébert, BQ): Mr. Speaker, would the minister agree that stricter control measures such as surprise inspections and monitoring carriers that are at risk are necessary in order to guarantee passenger safety?

Hon. Douglas Young (Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I could not agree more. We all know that the Government of Canada and especially the Minister of Transport have a fiduciary responsibility with respect to safety. I can assure the hon. member and the travelling public that everything has been done to ensure that safety. If there are any deficiencies in the control system at the present time, we will look into it and act in the best interests of Canadians who use public transportation.

* * *

*[English]***THE ARCTIC**

Mr. Gordon Kirkby (Prince Albert—Churchill River, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs. It concerns Canada's circumpolar arctic region. This area contains rich natural resources and extremely fragile but vitally important ecosystems which can potentially affect the global climate.

Furthermore, this arctic region is home to and provides an important economic base for many of Canada's aboriginal peoples. Will the parliamentary secretary please tell the House what the government is doing to safeguard Canada's interests in the Arctic.

Mr. Jesse Flis (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it has been part of this government's platform to safeguard Canadian interests in the Arctic. The House will be very pleased to know that the government has fulfilled that mandate by appointing Mary Simon as circumpolar ambassador.

She is the first Inuk to hold an ambassadorial position and will begin on Monday, October 31. This government is also supporting what the committee heard from many witnesses across Canada, the establishment of an arctic council to protect the interests of the aboriginal people, of the environment, et cetera.

Oral Questions

The government is committed to supporting such an Arctic council. We are also very interested in preventing other nuclear spills and in protecting the environment.

(1140)

I knew the members would be very interested in the government's commitment to protecting the Arctic and especially the indigenous people in that part of the world.

* * *

CRTC

Mr. Hugh Hanrahan (Edmonton—Strathcona, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, we know that the minister of heritage sent a letter to the CRTC that may have influenced the process of an arm's length quasi-judicial body under his jurisdiction. He has admitted this is improper.

Can the minister tell the House how he should properly communicate with the CRTC?

Hon. Michel Dupuy (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I wish to remind our colleague that I said quite clearly that my letter to the CRTC is not intended to convey support for or opposition to the application.

I think this is clear. This statement was made as soon as I had evidence that there was misinterpretation of my original letter. I will be very careful in the future to make sure that whatever I state leads to no misunderstanding.

Mr. Hugh Hanrahan (Edmonton—Strathcona, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I am not quite sure if my question was answered. It is very hard to find it in that discourse. I would follow with a supplementary.

Was the Minister of Canadian Heritage ever advised by the Prime Minister on the proper procedure for communicating with the CRTC?

Hon. Michel Dupuy (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister explained earlier the rules both with regard to the legal system and the regulatory system and what he intends to do.

* * *

[*Translation*]

TOURISM

Mr. André Caron (Jonquière, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Industry.

During his trip to Vancouver, the Prime Minister announced his government's strategy on tourism. Using the excuse of a need to co-ordinate the activities of all stakeholders in this area, the federal government is preparing to interfere once again in a field already well under provincial jurisdiction.

Does the minister not realize that by creating a Canadian commission on tourism with the mandate of promoting, within Canada and abroad, our country as a tourist destination, he is creating a new source of costly overlap?

[*English*]

Hon. John Manley (Minister of Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to explain to the hon. member that in addition to the obvious benefits of tourism in the job creation front, one of the key components of this strategy is to address the very significant part that the tourism account deficit plays in our current account deficit which is about \$30 billion a year and represents in effect the amount we have to borrow from foreigners every year.

To displace Canadians going offshore is as valuable to our current account deficit as it is to attract foreigners to Canada. Therefore by promoting Canada to Canadians we are also solving our fundamental issue.

It is not a duplication. It is an opportunity for us to ensure that all Canadians understand what a wonderful and rich country they share.

[*Translation*]

Mr. André Caron (Jonquière, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the purpose is to make all Canadians aware of the magnificent beauty of their country.

In that context, is the Minister of Industry willing to admit that the true reason Ottawa is trying to gain control over tourism promotion within Canada is to use it as a tool for promoting Canadian unity in preparation for the upcoming referendum in Quebec?

[*English*]

Hon. John Manley (Minister of Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this is really a rather silly question because the way the Prime Minister has announced the formation of the commission is that it is going to be on a co-operative basis. We expect and hope to have the co-operation both of provincial governments as well as the private sector in the establishment of the Canadian tourism commission.

(1145)

Decisions on the expenditures of the promotion account—because this is entirely intended to encourage demand for tourism—are going to be collective decisions. If people in the Government of Quebec do not wish to participate that is up to them. However I suspect that representatives of the Quebec tourism industry will see the promotion of tourism in the province of Quebec as a real asset for their industry and for their province in creating jobs in the province of Quebec and elsewhere in Canada.

CRTC

Mr. Randy White (Fraser Valley West, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the *Globe and Mail* reports this morning that the only reason the minister of heritage responded to the inappropriateness of his blatant intervention into the CRTC application was that a member of the Greek community in Montreal wrote to complain after discovering the intervention letter in the file.

Yesterday, when my staff went through that file, there was a letter from Mr. Mike Pattichis complaining strongly about the application but there was no letter from the minister of heritage, nor was there the other letter from Mr. Pattichis which we suspect is the original complaint.

I would like to ask the Minister of Canadian Heritage where those letters are and why they are missing from the file.

Hon. Michel Dupuy (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our colleagues from the Reform seem to have a lot of information, lots of files and a lot of letters.

What I have done is to put on the record of this House the letters I wrote.

Mr. Randy White (Fraser Valley West, Ref.): Make no mistake about that, Mr. Speaker. We do have some information but we are trying to get a little more.

One wonders how much Canadian people are being duped in this exercise, because staff at the CRTC assured us that this information is all public. The file is at the CRTC, if the minister would like to know. Now we find the very information Canadians require has been removed at the last minute.

What I would like to know is who removed the letters, at whose direction, when they were removed and why.

Hon. Michel Dupuy (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, these are allegations which are to my knowledge unfounded.

Yesterday I was asked whether I could also table the letter dated September 20. It was not written by me. I said I would consult with the person who produced this letter, and I said I would table it if the author of the letter was in agreement with it.

* * *

[Translation]

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Mr. Réginald Bélair (Cochrane—Superior, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Secretary of State for Parliamentary Affairs.

Oral Questions

Statistics Canada has reported a significant decrease in the number of people receiving unemployment insurance in the last eight months, that is 12.3 per cent less than in 1993.

Could the Secretary of State explain this rapid change and its consequences for the unemployment insurance fund?

Hon. Alfonso Gagliano (Secretary of State (Parliamentary Affairs) and Deputy Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, for the benefit of the hon. member and all my colleagues in the House, I will say that the decrease in the number of people receiving unemployment insurance is due to a sharp upturn in the economy.

We have created 340,000 jobs since we came to office; 90 per cent of these jobs are full-time, young people have filled more than 50 per cent of the jobs created in September and 147,000 of the new jobs went to women. This is the result of all the measures taken by our government: infrastructures, Youth Service, initiatives, and statistics. This will ease the implementation of our reform of social programs.

* * *

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Mr. René Canuel (Matapédia—Matane, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs.

The federal government has announced the establishment of 13 regional offices to provide one-stop service to small- and medium-sized businesses.

(1150)

The federal government has also confirmed its plans to interfere further with regional development, in spite of the consensus in Quebec for full powers to the province in this area.

Does the minister recognize that, after dismissing Quebec's claims over manpower training, Ottawa is about to do the very same thing with regional development? Is that the kind of co-operation we were promised by Ottawa?

Hon. Marcel Massé (President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister responsible for Public Service Renewal, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the federal government is always prepared to co-operate with any province, including Quebec, on any issue in which we have common interests.

In the case in point, the Federal Office of Regional Development already has 13 offices in Quebec; they have been there for over 20 years. No new office is being established. These offices already exist. What the minister responsible for the FORDQ did announce was the provision of an additional service to small- and medium-sized businesses, to improve operations through centralization of information on federal programs in existing offices of the FORDQ.

Oral Questions

Mr. René Canuel (Matapédia—Matane, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is for the same minister.

Does the minister recognize that his repeated attempts to increase federal government visibility in the regions only increases duplication between Ottawa and Quebec and that, in the end, it is the taxpayers and the regions that pay the shot?

Hon. Marcel Massé (President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister responsible for Public Service Renewal, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are the ones who have just put in place a system to reduce duplication and overlap. We already have eight provinces on board. Unfortunately, Quebec did not see fit to join us in reducing duplication and overlap.

In the case in point, the information we will be providing small business is information on federal programs, including international marketing insights that can only be gained through the federal government. That is why we plan to use these 13 existing offices to provide extra services to businesses.

* * *

[English]

ETHICS

Mr. Jim Silye (Calgary Centre, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister.

There is a clear discrepancy between what he said in the House yesterday and what he is saying today with respect to the ethics counsellor, meeting with the ethics counsellor and checking with him.

Another discrepancy is that yesterday the ethics commissioner said that there were no explicit guidelines for cabinet ministers dealing with government agencies. Has the Prime Minister not given the ethics commissioner a copy of the interest guidelines? I have a copy here if he wants an extra one.

The Speaker: Once again I appeal to colleagues not to use any props.

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, ministers have received books on guidelines. I have explained earlier that in the case of communications with the judiciary it is very clear they cannot do that directly by telephone or by letter.

They have to call, if they have a problem, the Minister of Justice who is the only one authorized to do something if the Minister of Justice decides to do something.

In the case of quasi-judicial bodies that relate to the affairs of the government, the affairs of the members of Parliament and so on, the guidelines were not clear to my satisfaction.

I have asked the Privy Council Office to prepare new guidelines in consultation with Mr. Wilson. I hope these guidelines will be ready very soon, and I will instruct ministers to follow them very clearly.

Mr. Jim Silye (Calgary Centre, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I hope I can clear this matter up.

The object of this code is to enhance public confidence in the integrity of public office holders which includes ministers of the crown, I might add. It further states under preferential treatment that "public office holders shall not step out of their official roles to assist private entities or persons in their dealings with the government where this would result in preferential treatment to any person". If that is not clear, I do not know what is.

In light of this revelation, would the Prime Minister admit that a serious breach of conduct occurred, just as bad as Mr. Charest and just as bad as Mr. Munro went through and therefore he has no choice but to restore integrity—

(1155)

The Speaker: As a general rule we do not refer to ourselves by our names in question period.

Mr. Silye: Mr. Speaker, I will put my question. In light of this revelation, Mr. Prime Minister, would you admit that a serious—

Some hon. members: Order.

The Speaker: Would the hon. member please put the question.

Mr. Silye: Would the Prime Minister admit that a serious breach of conduct has occurred and therefore he has no choice but to restore integrity to the office of the minister of heritage and ask for his resignation?

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have explained very clearly the rules that apply to communications with the judiciary. I explained clearly that my conclusion is that we have to make some clear directives in relation to the quasi-judiciary bodies that exist in the government.

Of course all these bodies report through ministers to Parliament. That is one of the problems. Ministers receive communications from members of Parliament. Every member of Parliament is obliged as a member of Parliament to listen to representations from constituents and ask that they be treated fairly. That is the work of every member of Parliament and ministers are members of Parliament.

We have to make the situation clear as to how a minister can be a member of Parliament at the same time. We cannot deprive

the constituencies that have ministers or the prime minister of the responsibility of public office holders to deliver the services that a member of Parliament is expected to do for his or her constituents.

* * *

[Translation]

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Paul Crête (Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Industry. Quebec has 30 federal research establishments that employ 2,533 workers, accounting for 11 per cent of jobs in federal facilities of this type in Canada, while the Chalk River centre in Ontario alone has 2,000 employees.

Does the Minister of Industry agree that there is a major imbalance in the distribution of federal research facilities in Canada and that Quebec does not receive its fair share of federal jobs in research and development?

Hon. John Manley (Minister of Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member knows very well how important research and development in Canada are for science and technology, which benefit all Canadians.

[English]

It is not possible to say that this is exactly how all federal research money should be allocated, given the fact that much of the existing research money spent by the federal government is in support of carrying out the mandates of federal departments. It is obviously going to result in a disproportionate amount of the total spending occurring close to the seat of government.

When he takes that number out of the calculation the member will discover that in fact Quebec has more than its proportionate share.

* * *

CRTC

Mrs. Diane Ablonczy (Calgary North, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister has told the House that when the Minister of Canadian Heritage wrote the letter we have been talking about he was just acting as an MP. Then he said that the minister made a mistake.

Since he cannot have it both ways, acting reasonably and properly as an MP and making a mistake, I would like the Prime Minister to tell the House which interpretation of the minister's conduct is the correct one.

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, of course when a minister is faced with a situation like that he or she has to realize he or she is a minister at the same time.

Oral Questions

Members write all the time to commissions recommending somebody or asking that a file be studied. A minister has to be more careful. That is why I said the Minister of Canadian Heritage should have been more careful, but he was acting in good faith as a member of Parliament. His letter was very clear. He asked for due process. He was not asking for a favour.

In reality what happened was that when the decision was made the person he wrote for did not receive the permit. In fact somebody else got the permit, so the letter did not help at all.

* * *

SOCIAL PROGRAMS

Mrs. Jane Stewart (Brant, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of National Revenue.

Newspaper reports indicate that many wealthy Canadians are receiving support under Canada's social security programs. Some are receiving unemployment insurance benefits; others the child tax credit.

(1200)

Will the minister please tell the House how he intends to ensure that the support of Canada's social security programs remains available for those Canadians who are truly deserving?

Hon. David Anderson (Minister of National Revenue, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for drawing attention to this very important question which deals with the allocation of scarce government resources.

I should point out that wealthy people currently receiving these benefits are doing so entirely legally. It is exactly that reason why the minister responsible for human resources has tabled the social security review for members to examine. It is exactly for that reason we are embarking upon a debate on these measures that we have inherited from the previous government.

I trust that other members of the House will also take part in this and make sure they follow the lead of the hon. member for Brant. I would add how important it is also to recognize that we should reject these constant demands from the opposition not to touch the tax system. If we accepted its demands we would be unable to make these changes which will free up scarce resources for people who need them most.

I would suggest that both with respect to the debate on social security and in the preparatory discussions for the budget we take full part in making sure the system is improved so scarce money goes where it should go.

* * *

CHILD CARE

Mr. Vic Althouse (Mackenzie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Human Resources Development, to whom I sent notice yesterday.

Last summer the 11 ministers of agriculture set up a rural initiative to develop child care in the rural parts of Canada. That

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budget will come from the human resources department which now has some \$700 million for 150,000 child care spaces.

I wonder what proportion of that will go to rural areas. Will it use the Langruth, Manitoba model of delivering child care which is quite flexible and perfectly suited to rural needs?

Hon. Alfonso Gagliano (Secretary of State (Parliamentary Affairs) and Deputy Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there is a \$720 million federal commitment not yet allocated on a provincial basis. The minister is looking at it and definitely, through negotiations, will answer the problem.

* * *

PRESENCE IN GALLERY

The Speaker: I draw the attention of hon. members to the presence in the gallery of a Chinese delegation led by Mr. Yue Qi-Feng, Governor of Heilongjiang province.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

Hon. Alfonso Gagliano (Secretary of State (Parliamentary Affairs) and Deputy Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8), I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the government's response to seven petitions.

* * *

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

TRANSPORT

Mr. Stan Keyes (Hamilton West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the privilege to present, in both official languages, the second report of the Standing Committee on Transport. This is a report on Bill C-38 which was referred to the committee following first reading. It is the first bill under this new procedure to be reported back to the House.

While this bill is the first to follow this unprecedented process, I would draw to the House's attention the fact that the committee study of this bill was done with professionalism and serious effort which is the proud tradition of the transport committee and the hallmark of its members.

PETITIONS

VIETNAM

Mr. Mac Harb (Ottawa Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour and pleasure to introduce a petition on behalf of the Canadian Vietnamese community.

This petition is signed by constituents throughout the Ottawa—Carleton region.

(1205)

They are calling on the Government of Vietnam to deal with the issue of human rights in an expeditious fashion. They are also calling on the Government of Vietnam to respect their religious freedom.

I hope in the spirit of dialogue that the Government of Vietnam would take this as a representation from the Canadian—Vietnamese community.

LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION

Mr. Mac Harb (Ottawa Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I also have two other petitions to table in accordance with Standing Order 36. They deal with the role of the Leader of the Opposition.

ABORTION

Mrs. Beryl Gaffney (Nepean, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have two sets of petitions. The first petition says that whereas the majority of Canadians respect the sanctity of human life and whereas human life at the pre-born stage is not protected in Canadian society, therefore these petitioners pray that Parliament act immediately to extend protection to the unborn child by amending the Criminal Code to extend the same protection enjoyed by born human beings to unborn human beings.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Mrs. Beryl Gaffney (Nepean, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the second petition is from 121 petitioners who believe the privileges which society accords to heterosexual couples should not be extended to same sex relationships. They request that Parliament not amend the human rights code, the Canadian Human Rights Act, or the Charter of Rights and Freedoms in any way which would tend to indicate societal approval of same sex relationships.

LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION

Mr. Jim Jordan (Leeds—Grenville, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have a petition from many residents in my riding of Leeds—Grenville calling on Parliament to inform the Leader of the Opposition that he is not supporting the majority view of the residents of Leeds—Grenville when he is travelling to all parts of the world to promote the separation of Quebec from Canada.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Ms. Val Meredith (Surrey—White Rock—South Langley, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I have five petitions to present today. In the first the petitioners pray and request that Parliament not amend

the human rights code, the Canadian Human Rights Act, or the Charter of Rights and Freedoms in any way which would tend to indicate societal approval of same sex relationships or of homosexuality, including amending the human rights code to include in the prohibited grounds of discrimination the undefined phrase sexual orientation.

ABORTION

Ms. Val Meredith (Surrey—White Rock—South Langley, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I have two petitions where the petitioners pray that Parliament will act immediately to extend protection to the unborn child by amending the Criminal Code to extend the same protection enjoyed by born human beings to unborn human beings.

ASSISTED SUICIDE

Ms. Val Meredith (Surrey—White Rock—South Langley, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the final two petitions pray that Parliament ensure that the present provisions of the Criminal Code of Canada prohibiting assisted suicide be enforced vigorously and to make no changes in law which would sanction or allow the aiding or abetting of suicide or active or passive euthanasia.

Mr. Morris Bodnar (Saskatoon—Dundurn, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have three petitions today. The first petition is asking that Parliament continue to reject euthanasia and physician assisted suicide in Canada, that section 241 of the Criminal Code be vigorously enforced and that Parliament consider expanding palliative care that would be accessible to all dying persons in Canada.

MINING

Mr. Morris Bodnar (Saskatoon—Dundurn, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the other two petitions deal with the mining industry in Canada. In light of the mining industry being forced to look to new opportunities outside of Canada and in light of the Canadian mining industry having proposed a 10 point plan, it is requesting that Parliament take action to increase employment in this sector, promote exploration, rebuild Canada's mineral reserves, sustain mining communities and keep mining in Canada.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Mr. Andrew Telegdi (Waterloo, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am presenting petitions that were recently collected at the Waterloo Pentecostal Assembly. One with 308 signatures deals with sexual orientation. The petitioners pray and request that Parliament not amend the Canadian Human Rights Act or the Charter of Rights and Freedoms in any way which would tend to indicate societal approval of same sex relationships or homosexuality.

ASSISTED SUICIDE

Mr. Andrew Telegdi (Waterloo, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the next petition that was collected at the Waterloo Pentecostal Assembly deals with the issue of the sanctity of human life. The

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petitioners pray that Parliament ensure present provisions of the Criminal Code of Canada prohibiting assisted suicide be 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.

(1210)

ABORTION

Mr. Andrew Telegdi (Waterloo, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have a third petition collected by the Pentecostal Tabernacle dealing with abortion.

The petitioners pray that Parliament act immediately to extend protection to the unborn child by amending the Criminal Code to extend the same protection enjoyed by born human beings to unborn human beings.

MARKHAM—WHITCHURCH—STOUFFVILLE

Mr. Ed Harper (Simcoe Centre, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36, I rise in the House today to present a petition signed by approximately 300 people of the Markham—Whitchurch—Stouffville riding.

The petitioners claim: "Their member has admitted to inexcusable behaviour. He intentionally misrepresented his credentials and his constituents have absolutely lost all respect for and confidence in their member to represent them".

The petitioners would like their member's indiscretions thoroughly investigated; and if found unfit to serve that his seat be declared vacant so that a byelection may be held.

ASSISTED SUICIDE

Ms. Margaret Bridgman (Surrey North, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36 I rise to table a petition from residents of my constituency of Surrey North. The petition signed by 141 residents asks that the Parliament of Canada not repeal or amend section 241 of the Criminal Code in any way and to uphold the Supreme Court of Canada's decision of September 30, 1993 to disallow assisted suicide and/or euthanasia.

* * *

[Translation]

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

Hon. Alfonso Gagliano (Secretary of State (Parliamentary Affairs) and Deputy Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Question No. 63 will be answered today.

[Text]

Question No. 63—**Mr. de Savoye:**

What is the cost of the duplication and overlap pointed out by the Auditor General of Canada in his most recent report on page 471, paragraph 18.2 where he writes that "the development of seniors policy and programs is unco-ordinated and fragmented; some duplication and overlap result"?

Government Orders

Hon. Diane Marleau (Minister of Health): In his 1993 report the Auditor General did not attach cost figures to the duplication and overlap mentioned in paragraph 18.2 on page 471.

Since the report's release, however, all key elements of the 1988 seniors' strategy have been consolidated into a single unit within Health Canada with an administrative cost saving of \$250,000.

[Translation]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): The question enumerated by the Secretary of State has been answered.

Mr. Gagliano: Mr. Speaker, I ask that the remaining questions be allowed to stand.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): Shall the remaining questions stand?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

SPLIT LAKE CREE FIRST NATION FLOODED LAND ACT

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-36, an act respecting the Split Lake Cree First Nation and the settlement of matters arising from an agreement relating to the flooding of land, be read the third time and passed.

Mr. Dick Harris (Prince George—Bulkley Valley, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today in support of Bill C-36, the Split Lake Cree First Nation Flooded Land Act.

Before I start to speak about the quality of the bill, I want to make it clear that the government can take no credit for drafting the agreement. As much as it pains me, I have to acknowledge that the previous government and the people negotiating on its behalf did an excellent job on the agreement.

At the same time I will not hesitate to credit the present government for implementing this agreement by way of Bill C-36.

I am confused as to the display of schizophrenia on behalf of the government when back in June it introduced a couple of pieces of legislation dealing with aboriginal issues, namely Bills C-33 and C-34 which were terrible pieces of legislation and terrible agreements. Now in direct contrast it is introducing a bill that has a great deal of merit. I wonder how the present government can take such opposite views of agreements and still call it good legislation.

As an example, when we compare Bills C-33 and C-34 with the way Bill C-36 was introduced, on Bill C-36 there was plenty of time to analyse the legislation and the agreement to make reasoned, logical decisions. In contrast to that, Bills C-33 and C-34 were presented a very short time before debate. There was no time to analyse the two bills before they were debated in the House.

On Bill C-36, there was plenty of time to prepare a response to the bill and the agreement through a detailed analysis. On Bill C-33 and Bill C-34 as you know, Mr. Speaker, there was no time to prepare adequate responses. Once the bills were rammed through the House, we had time to come up with more reasons why those bills should not have gone through.

(1215)

In contrast there was plenty of time to debate Bill C-36, which we really appreciated. Our party has debated it at length. It is good legislation. By contrast the Liberal government invoked closure on debate on Bill C-33 and Bill C-34. It devalued the democracy that was present in the House.

We appreciate the debate time we have had on Bill C-36. Bill C-36 is an excellent agreement, an excellent piece of legislation because there is finality to it. It actually reaches a conclusion. The amount of moneys payable under the agreement are set. They are predetermined. They will end at a particular date.

As opposed to that, in Bill C-33 and Bill C-34 it is completely open-ended. It is a blank cheque piece of legislation. There is no finality to it. There are so many grey areas that we could be paying for the same thing over and over again for generations to come. We appreciate the finality that Bill C-36 has and we question the reasoning behind Bill C-33 and Bill C-34 that the government was so pleased about.

By contrast again, in Bill C-36 there was sound logical and reasonable solutions put into this agreement to solve the problem. Contrast in Bill C-33 and Bill C-34 there was no reason, no logic, no sound solutions to the problem, just vague statements that left the opportunity for abuse over and over again and the cost to rise upward and upward and the payments to go on for generations.

Now that I have drawn a comparison between a good piece of legislation and a great agreement that we have in the House today with some terrible legislation, Bill C-33 and Bill C-34 that the Liberals rammed through the House in June in order that they could break early and have a holiday over the summer and the minister of Indian affairs could go to the Yukon and proudly proclaim this agreement, I want to talk about Bill C-36 and why our party would support it.

Problems in this region of Manitoba began in the 1940s with the Lake Winnipeg regulation and the Churchill River diversion projects. These were huge hydroelectric projects initiated by Manitoba Hydro that flooded almost 12,000 acres of reserve

lands that were the occupied lands of the different Cree groups there. This represented about 10 per cent of reserve lands among five Indian bands.

In 1975 the Northern Flood Committee was established with representation of all five bands which of course included the Split Lake Cree band.

This committee was established to determine exactly how the bands affected by this hydroelectric project were to be compensated for the flooding of their lands and the negative impact that this had on aboriginal fishing, hunting, gathering and trapping, traditional activities in that part of the area among the Cree bands.

The work of the committee eventually led to the creation of an economic development agreement and the Northern Flood Agreement known as the NFA in 1977. That was not a good agreement. The NFA was vague in its terms. It was very open-ended. It presented all sorts of opportunities for abuse of the compensation. It has cost the government well over \$100 million because of the disastrous formulating of that agreement.

Bill C-36 is a result of the many serious problems that were experienced under the NFA between the bands, Manitoba Hydro, the Government of Manitoba and the Government of Canada, problems which began only a year after the signing of the NFA in 1978 and carried through to 1988.

In 1992 the Auditor General reviewed the operation of the NFA and found a huge number of problems. He found that the terms and conditions of the NFA were terribly unclear. This resulted over a period of time in a large number of arbitration applications being put forward by the signatories over the years.

(1220)

Just after the NFA was signed the terms and conditions were so clouded that the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development requested an extensive legal analysis of its obligations under the agreement. DIAND was very worried about this agreement and the implications it would cause for compensation and for provisions down the road. It requested this huge legal analysis so it could get its position a little bit clearer.

This resulted in a 72 page report being produced in 1983 and later a 200 page report being produced in 1987 outlining DIAND's obligations under the NFA.

One really has to wonder whether the people who put this NFA together were asleep at the switch when it was signed and what the government was doing when it was being put together. In 1983 and 1987 the government had to go into this huge legal process to find out exactly what its obligations were under the NFA. One wonders who the negotiators were representing. It also brings into question their competence.

By way of example of the obligations of the government that were unclear, the NFA appears to be definitive when it states that Canada is responsible to supply drinking water to the bands. Manitoba Hydro was supposed to pick up 50 per cent of the cost of doing this. It just so happens that to date Canada has spent \$88

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million on this obligation to supply pure drinking water and Manitoba Hydro has not picked up one cent of this cost. We are talking about \$44 million here.

When this bill was before the committee on aboriginal affairs we discovered that an arbitrator was still trying to determine if Manitoba is responsible to pay 50 per cent of Canada's cost of supplying drinking water to the five bands. We have the Northern Flood Agreement that is or appears to be very definitive that there was a 50 per cent cost sharing between Canada and Manitoba Hydro. It ends up that Canada has paid the whole shot up to now, \$88 million. There is an arbitrator still trying to determine if Manitoba Hydro was responsible to pick up 50 per cent of the cost. It gives an idea how unclear in many areas the NFA was. It was actually a very bad agreement for Canada to be involved in.

This example I just gave on the drinking water clearly highlights the uncertainty which exists in the terms and conditions of the NFA. That is why it is such a good thing that we are able to break out of it and sign this particular agreement with the Split Lake Cree Nation.

The Auditor General determined that the NFA was designed to be implemented through a co-operative approach. Instead, he found that the NFA was being implemented through an adversarial approach. This adversarial condition was brought about by the cloudiness of the agreement and people thinking that they could take advantage of this. In fact, there was every opportunity for them to take advantage of it.

As a matter of fact, as of November 1991 signatories to the NFA had filed a total of 150 claims for arbitration. At that time there were 32 outstanding claims where Canada was either the respondent or the claimant. This adversarial process is frustrating to the bands, it is frustrating to the government and it is frustrating to Manitoba Hydro.

It is a process which of course is expensive to the taxpayer because the taxpayers end up paying the shot for the legal costs on this.

(1225)

Because the parties are retaining legal counsel to battle their claim before an arbitrator, the Canadian taxpayer ends up picking up the tab for the federal government's lawyers, the Manitoba Hydro lawyers, the province of Manitoba and the bands involved, the signatories on the native side of it.

I can clearly say that the taxpayer may never know the true cost of the Northern Flood Agreement. It is that bad and it is that expensive.

The Auditor General estimated that the NFA had cost the federal government \$115 million and up between the time it was signed in 1977 and March 31, 1991. This was an agreement that was supposed to solve the problems. It created problems and it created a huge obligation to the Canadian taxpayers. However, the Auditor General said that this was strictly an estimate because in fact—I love this statement—the Department of

Government Orders

Indian Affairs and Northern Development had not captured the entire cost.

Within his recommendations in the 1992 report, the Auditor General stated that the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development must capture all NFA associated costs, a huge obligation for the taxpayers of Canada for this disaster of an agreement, the Northern Flood Agreement.

In all, the NFA was not clear in its terms and conditions and this led to various claims being filed for arbitration between the parties which would sign the agreement. This led to an expensive and certainly unworkable agreement.

In 1989 negotiations began between the parties to address the severe difficulties found within the Northern Flood Agreement. The negotiators were seeking band specific agreements. I think that was a good first step.

Bill C-36 is just such an agreement reached with the Split Lake Cree band. I want to say that as a participant in the committee process on this bill, I had the opportunity to talk with many members of the Split Lake Cree band. I was very encouraged by their determination to resolve this thing and get it so that there is some definite finality to this bill in order that the vague, grey areas of the NFA can be put aside. They can get on with life and make some definite plans for the future well-being of their community.

I commend the Split Lake Cree band for having the courage to break away from the Manitoba flood committee and negotiate this final settlement with Manitoba Hydro and the provincial and federal governments. They faced a lot of adverse criticism from the other four bands that were the original signatories for breaking away and wanting to get the thing done. I commend them for what they did. It was a very courageous act.

Apparently work is currently under way with the four remaining bands to try to draft similar agreements to this in the coming year.

There is again a lot of resistance to it because of the blank cheque opportunities in the NFA. It is incumbent on the government that it pursue coming up with agreements for those four remaining bands as quickly as possible. It is going to solve the problems in that area and it will save the Canadian taxpayers a huge amount of money and problems.

I am not going to be as long as the former speaker but I want to talk briefly about some of the really good things in this bill. Specifically under this agreement, the Split Lake Cree will receive about \$47 million over five years. They will receive some 34,000 acres of new reserve land and some 2,800 acres of fee simple land.

This is good because they will know what their land reserve will be. They will have this money for economic development in setting up infrastructures within their communities and they will be able to put a business plan together.

(1230)

It is interesting to note also that the settlement moneys will be transferred to a trust fund in the name of the Split Lake Cree. These funds will be administered by a trust company in order to guarantee accountability. This is going to ensure that the band has the utmost flexibility in determining where and how the money will be spent within its community. In speaking with the Split Lake Cree I believe it is going to be spent with due diligence and accountability.

The 2,800 acres of fee simple lands will be subject to property taxation. Any business originating from those lands is also taxable. I like that. We have a form of taxation that is going to help the economic base.

I am also pleased to note that this agreement was put to a referendum in the band. Individuals in the band voted 93 per cent in favour of the agreement. I like that as well because that is the democratic process. It is important to utilize such a mechanism in order to allow the input of the rank and file band members since this settlement agreement has a direct effect upon their lives and the lives of their children.

Further Bill C-36 was examined by the Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, which examination ended on October 6. This bill was reported back to the House without amendment. It was a good piece of legislation. It is a good agreement. Committee members found that the bill sufficiently addresses the problems found within the northern flood agreement. Members hope that Bill C-36 will adequately settle the grievances arising out of the flooding of reserve lands.

The Reform Party supports the settling of legitimate Indian grievances. This indeed is a legitimate grievance. I know this new agreement will work a lot better than the NFA. I hope that similar settlement legislation relating to other affected bands will be forthcoming.

I have no hesitation and the Reform Party has no hesitation in supporting Bill C-36.

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

* * *

DEPARTMENT OF CANADIAN HERITAGE ACT

The House resumed from October 27 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; of the amendment; and of the amendment to the amendment.

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Mrs. Jan Brown (Calgary Southeast, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, for the interest of the House I would like to provide the reasons for bringing forward the subamendment that was presented yesterday.

The issues in the reorganization of this department are complex. We are seeing five ministries becoming one. It consolidates several subcabinet departments: the Secretary of State; the Department of Multiculturalism and Citizenship; the Department of Fitness and Amateur Sport; Parks Canada; components of Environment Canada; and the heritage component of the Department of Communications.

The government has talked a great deal about meeting its deficit target. I was really quite astounded to hear that this reorganization is going to save the huge figure of \$7.3 million. Our debt today is over \$536 billion. We have a deficit of \$40 billion. Yet this reshuffling and this reorganization is going to save \$7.3 million. Not a single person-year is lost; everybody has been reshuffled and moved off to other departments. Therefore I am not quite certain where the savings are.

(1235)

The other side of the House, the government side, has often challenged the Reform Party MPs to come forward with some good ideas. We certainly want to ensure that the finance minister indeed does have access to this report by June 23, 1995 to help him with his short term deficit targets that he puts and that he wants to reach.

I also felt it was important to express one last time for the record and for Canadians generally exactly what we mean by special interest funding. This really is a ministry of special interest.

I have with me a number of items I would like to read into the record which come from a 703 page document listing all of the special interest funding that is available to Canadians today. It is important for us to look at these particular elements because they clearly describe special interests in Canada.

In the 1993-94 fiscal year \$17,200 was given to something called "The Hidden Advantage". It was a series of round table discussions to be held in Vancouver, Toronto, Montreal, Calgary and Saskatoon on the relationship between diversity and international trade with a particular focus on the Pacific rim. Participants would include opinion leaders in the Asian Canadian community.

A staggering \$85,000 was committed to the Canadian Advertising Foundation. It was for "Minorities in advertising; we are all Canadians". This is a communications outreach. It was for the dissemination of the findings of the research done by Goldfarb Consultants for the Race Relations Advisory Council on advertising and the provision of suggestions on how to

include and portray visible minorities in advertising. Once again, \$85,000 for that particular activity.

The 1993-94 program funding for the Canadian Council for Multicultural and Intercultural Education was \$198,000. This was to provide program and project support for the following activities: operations of the national office, co-ordination of CCMIE activities, the board, executive, meetings, ECE and Race Relations Resource Advisory Committee workshops at the CCMIE national conference that is held every year. That was almost \$200,000 to that group.

There is also the Clarke Institute of Psychiatry, Culture, Community and Health Studies. It received \$5,000 for a national symposium titled "Models of Health Care in a Pluralistic Canada". It was a two and a half day national symposium on models of health care appropriate for a pluralistic Canada, whatever that means. It was held in Toronto and was for research workers, health care providers, health educators, public health agency staff, policymakers and consumers.

The Conference Board of Canada received \$86,635 on "Dimensions of Diversity in Canadian Business". This was a two-year research and information dissemination project on the importance of diversity to Canadian economic prosperity, with a particular focus on managing and valuing diversity in the Canadian private sector.

There was \$15,000 committed to the public service announcement campaign on violence in society and the development of a public service announcement, a PSA. This campaign was going to focus on violence in the community and the media.

The Ethnocultural Business Advisory Committee of metro Toronto received \$20,000 for its small business week on ethnocultural business activities. This is a co-ordination of events to be held during small business week by eight Ethnocultural Business Advisory Committees across Canada. These events include trade shows, workshops, business awards and networking events. This is part of an annual national event for small business.

(1240)

The next thing I want to bring into focus is the \$40,000 that was given to the Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto Chief Administrative Officers department. It is for municipal procurement strategies and minority economic development. The municipal government will adjust its procedures for bidding on contracts to ensure they do not present barriers to minority owned businesses and it will train its managers on the implementation of those procedures.

Mr. Speaker, you will be pleased to hear that the National Association of Friendship Centres received \$15,000 for phase three of its national race relations strategy. This project will develop resources and tools that will be used to train race relations workers from friendship centres across Canada.

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The Steering Committee Forum for Central and Eastern European Canadians on Business Development in 1993 received \$10,000. This was a forum for central and eastern European Canadians on business development. This two-day national forum was to be held in Toronto. It was on how the Ukrainians, German and Polish Canadian communities in Canada could utilize the business expertise within their respective communities to become more involved in business activity.

The next one I want to raise is on drama and education to foster understanding. Easin Productions received \$10,000. This project will introduce students and community groups to race relations and cross-cultural issues through the medium of live theatre and workshops. There will be at least 174 presentations in schools and community groups.

I really wonder how unifying all of these different activities are in Canada today. We are seeing so many of these projects and workshops unfolding that highlight more and more of our differences. They are not bringing us together or unifying us on how we are the same.

The Black Educators Association of Nova Scotia received \$34,442. This was for program funding to address educational concerns and deliver workshops in black communities to increase parental involvement in education issues.

The Dartmouth Police Department received \$3,526 for a 14-week employment project for two visible minority students.

The Eye Level Gallery received \$1,507 for workshops presented on key video works by a black artist and a cultural skill development workshop.

The International Education Centre received \$34,160 to conduct a series of multicultural and race relations programs for teachers, education administrators, students and community groups.

The Parents for a Model School Committee of the St. Joseph A. McKay Home and School Association received \$11,970. This was for a proposal for phase one of a model school project for this particular association. It was for the development of the infrastructure and support system for an anti-racism and anti-poverty project for an inner city school in Halifax.

Shelburne County Cultural Awareness Society received \$25,645. This project is researching data and conducting an archaeological survey on a site of historic significance to the Nova Scotia black community which has been selected for a regional landfill.

In closing I want to state for the record once again that the reorganization of the Department of Canadian Heritage is really a ministry of special interests. The government is creating a new superministry of cultural identity that will legislatively en-

trench grants to feminist, multicultural, linguistic and environmental groups. I submit that it denies us an opportunity to define ourselves as Canadians.

Mr. Reg Alcock (Winnipeg South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I very much thank the previous speaker for taking the time to review some of those issues because they underline one of the things I want to talk about in addressing this reorganization. Frankly I am a little astounded that when reading through the list of grants the member did not understand what people were attempting to do. People in business and in government throughout the country from coast to coast have recognized that we in Canada have built something profound, wonderful and strong. It gives us strength internationally that no other country in the world has.

(1245)

We have recognized that in our diversity there is strength. I as an English Canadian married to a Polish Ukrainian person can celebrate what we bring to the country. At a time of globalism, at a time when we are reaching out to the entire world, we can build upon those strengths.

Professor Neil McDonald who lives in my riding is renowned throughout North America as an expert on the question of diversity. He points out that at a time when we are reaching across the ocean, when we are reaching into other countries of the world to build markets and build relationships, we have in Canada a vast resource of people who can work with us.

What is the member concerned about? Is it a \$17,000 grant to talk about diversity and international trade to help build our balance of payments and support exports in the country? That does not sound terribly subversive to me.

Let me respond to a couple of points the member highlighted. Referring to models of health care, at a time when we are working so hard to strengthen our health care system and are supporting research into some models of health care it strikes me as something we should be celebrating, not criticizing.

Turning to violence in society, is the member saying she is afraid to look at it or that the government should not be taking action on such a critical social issue?

Referring to drama and education to foster understanding for students, as members and as a government we have a role to educate people, to help people from all parts of the country to understand what the country is really about. By fostering understanding of other groups we reduce tensions and reduce some of the violence in communities. Is this what the party opposite is opposed to?

Then parents for a model school. I did not select these things. This is what the member read into the record as examples of abuse. We are funding parents to help them look at building a model school promoting anti-racism and anti-poverty. Is that

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what the party opposite says it is opposed to? Frankly I am a little astounded.

I suspect the majority of the House supports the reorganization the government has begun. As we promised we have worked to reduce the size of cabinet, to streamline operations and to bring together like departments. We have had many debates in the House about a number of departments and the department of heritage is one which I support very strongly.

The proposed legislation combines sectors that share the following responsibilities: the promotion of Canadian identity, cultural development and heritage, and the maintenance of our national parks.

I want to describe in some detail the different sectors and how they relate to fostering Canadian values and Canadian identity. The sector of citizenship and Canadian identity promotes the use of official languages. I have heard much talk from members opposite about the evils of promoting official languages. They should stop and reflect upon what we have built in the country, how we have managed in very difficult times and with very extreme tensions by promoting understanding, acceptance, introduction and inclusion rather than rejection.

The federal government is the government of all Canadians. Therefore its policies must serve a diverse population of some 27 million people. Actually Statistics Canada says it will soon be 29 million.

The department believes that official bilingualism allows for services in the official language of the citizen's choice and reflects a simple commitment to understand and to be understood by the public in English or in French.

(1250)

Lester B. Pearson put it very eloquently when he said:

In a diverse federal state such as Canada, it is important that all citizens should have a fair and equal opportunity to participate in the national administration and to identify themselves with and feel at home in their own national capital.

In addition to official languages, the citizenship and Canadian identity sector is also responsible for the Multiculturalism Act. It is apparent that Canada's increasingly diverse population provides a unique resource base for the successful development and expansion of our economy.

This is something that multinationals have recognized. This is something that the business community in Canada has recognized. This is something that the Liberal government has recognized for several decades, and that is why we have built the multiculturalism process. It is passing strange to me that members opposite have not recognized this point.

A diverse society is one which ensures a continuous and dynamic interplay of better ideas and experiences which are essential for a growing, competitive, global economy. By working with various ethnocultural and mainstream organizations the Department of Canadian Heritage is effecting real change to make Canada a better place and the envy of every nation.

That is what we are. I really support and applaud the Secretary of State for Multiculturalism for the work she is doing as she goes across the country supporting and promoting diversity. In that diversity is our strength as a country.

Amateur sports and related events like the Canadian games also fall under this department. These events are an important part of how the department fosters a positive Canadian identity and pursues the values of excellence that Canadians hold true. The sector of cultural development is also an essential, integral part of the department. This sector develops policies and programs to promote artistic expression and the preservation of Canada's heritage.

The economic impact of the arts community on the Canadian economy cannot be understated. In 1992 the cultural sector accounted for 3.7 per cent of GDP, or roughly \$22 billion. In addition the sector employed almost 500,000 people, a relatively large bang for the buck.

The Government of Canada recognizes the importance of Canada's cultural sector. That is why under the auspices of the Department of Canadian Heritage it rigorously promotes the interest of Canada's cultural community on the international scene.

Finally I would like to refer to the integral part the parks sector fills in the Department of Canadian Heritage. This sector fulfils national and international responsibilities in mandated areas of heritage recognition and conservation. Our rich natural and historic heritage includes 36 national parks, 750 historic sites, 9 historic canals and 4 marine areas located throughout Canada. They include some of the gems of the world's heritage. Parks Canada commemorates, protects and presents these national treasures. Parks Canada ensures public understanding, appreciation and enjoyment of this heritage while at the same time ensures long term, ecological and commemorative integrity.

In short, what we are on about today is simply bringing together elements in government that speak to every person in the country and to the world about what we are as Canadians. We should all celebrate and enjoy the fruits of the work of the department. It is at the foundation of what makes us the best country in the world.

Mr. Elwin Hermanson (Kindersley—Lloydminster, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I will not speak for a long time on Bill C-53 because we have spent several hours dealing with the bill. We have proposed an amendment to the amendment calling for the committee to have a deadline to review the entire focus and purpose of the Department of Canadian Heritage.

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I would like to respond to some of the comments made by the member for Winnipeg South in his response to my colleague, the member for Calgary Southeast. The member for Calgary Southeast was reading and referring to some grants made by the department under the banner of multiculturalism.

I share the concerns of the hon. member for Winnipeg South regarding racial discrimination, the importance of education and the importance of health.

(1255)

I would like to remind the House that we have a justice department which should adequately be able to protect our citizens from discrimination and should be able to undertake any necessary action to guard the rights of all Canadian citizens.

We have a Department of Health that is supposed to be concerned with the health of Canadians. Why is the Department of Canadian Heritage, under the banner of multiculturalism, messing around with Canadian health issues? It does not make sense. What about education? Education is a provincial responsibility. The federal government has some responsibility for funding, particularly for higher education, but why is the Department of Canadian Heritage under the banner of multiculturalism offering grants regarding education programs?

It does not make sense. It costs a lot of money. What is the whole premise of the Department of Canadian Heritage, why it exists? Why do things like multiculturalism and Canada Council grants flow from that department or why do they need to be reviewed?

I state my case. I think I have the support of my colleague from Calgary Southeast in saying that we are not against the fundamental principles that Canadians support, but we are against the foolish administration from the federal perspective as it relates to those important elements Canadians so much enjoy.

Mrs. Beryl Gaffney (Nepean, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to speak on second reading of Bill C-53, an act to establish the Department of Canadian Heritage.

The bill will give the new department a mandate to assume its rightful share of responsibility in administering the legislative responsibilities of the heritage department. As everyone in the House is aware, the new department came into being in 1993 with the amalgamation of several departments.

The legislation creates a department that will have responsibility in the areas of national parks, historic sites, cultural development, amateur sports, multiculturalism and official languages. All these areas were previously in five separate ministries and are now combined into one. That in itself is a very

significant cost saving measure. All these areas have clear links to our identity as Canadians.

I found it very disconcerting yesterday to listen to every member of the Reform Party and how they spoke against Bill C-53. I did not hear one positive comment from that side of the House with regard to Canada's heritage. One after another they stood in their places in the House and spoke about each of the main aspects of the heritage department.

I would like to quote only one member. I am sorry the member for Kindersley—Lloydminster who just spoke had to leave. He mentioned what the new ministry was responsible for, as reported in yesterday's *Hansard*:

—an unruly collection of agencies which has been lumped together arbitrarily. It truly is the ministry of lost souls, a ministry put together consisting of many irrelevant and outdated agencies with nowhere else to go.

Let me mention a couple of the so-called unruly irrelevant areas the member was talking about. He was talking about the Museum of Civilization, the Museum of Nature, the National Archives, the National Arts Centre, the National Battlefields Commission, the National Film Board, the National Gallery, the National Library, the Museum of Science and Technology, Parks Canada, Heritage Sites, and on and on.

If anything shows our Canadian identity, it is those particular national agencies that we happen to be very fortunate to have in the country.

The institutions I have mentioned are some of the cultural heritage institutions of Canada. Not that many years ago I chaired for several years in the region of Ottawa-Carleton the advisory committee on the arts. I would like to explain my connection between a local regional advisory committee on the arts and the heritage department. They are very different. One is huge and one is small.

(1300)

Their roles are the same, to retain the heritage of our country and to promote the language and the culture.

Without the help of a major department like the department of heritage or without the advisory committee on the arts which I just spoke of, one requires the assistance of municipal governments, regional governments, provincial and federal governments.

Without those four levels of government, culture would not survive in the country because of its size. Whether it is film, music, radio, television, archives, museums, our rivers, lakes and mountains, we as legislators have a responsibility to promote and protect.

Most of the Reform Party people come from the province of Alberta. I happened to be in Alberta two weeks ago and spent a week in the beautiful Banff resort area in the Banff National Park. What a jewel in the crown of Canada is the Banff National

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Park with national funding going into that park. I am proud that all Canadians recognize the importance of not only this national park but many national parks in this country.

I mentioned the commemorative war memorial. Soldiers from every province in the country died in Europe during the wars. Have you ever gone to those cemeteries? Have you ever visited them? I did this past—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): Order. I know that members feel very strongly about issues. It is the place of vigorous debate but I would call on each and every member to please direct their interventions through the Chair.

Mrs. Gaffney: Mr. Speaker, you get quite emotionally wound up in these things and you go off track every now and then.

There are gravesites of Canadian soldiers in Europe. Our tax dollars maintain those graveyards in France, Holland and Belgium. There is even a Canadian gravesite just over the border in Germany.

They are beautifully maintained. It makes us realize how lucky we are to be Canadians. Canadians died so that you and I can sit in the House of Commons, be free and be free to speak. It is part of our history and it is something that we must not lose.

Would we have a national orchestra or a national film library, and I could go on and on, without federal assistance? Of course not. They could not possibly operate without financial assistance from the federal government.

It is our responsibility to encourage artists, whether music, sports or whatever. They need to have the opportunity to develop their talents so that you and I and future generations have the opportunity to dwell on the importance to this nation of the contributions of those people who have gone before us.

In my riding of Nepean we have the Centrepointe Theatre which is a 1,000 seat theatre comparable in size to the National Arts Centre theatre. I look at the operation of that theatre. It is operated by volunteers.

The Centrepointe Theatre is not any different than any other organization. The National Arts Centre has volunteers, as does the National Museum. People in this country give their hearts and souls and their time to contribute to these institutions.

Has anyone been to Washington or a state capital recently? Do members know how Americans promote their heritage? It is front and centre every day of the week in school. They are constantly there with buildings and monuments to retain their

heritage. I did not hear one positive statement from the Reform Party on heritage.

The government appreciates that there are some concerns about the decision to divide responsibility for broadcasting and telecommunications between Canadian Heritage and Industry Canada. The inclusion of telecommunications in the department's industry portfolio recognizes the increasing role of telecommunications.

On the other hand, broadcasting fits more closely with the identity of culture and the Canadian content mandate of the Canadian heritage. Canadians know that the government is committed to fiscal responsibility in all areas of federal endeavour. Bill C-53 is a prime example of that.

By putting these five ministries into one, we are looking at the bottom line. The Reform Party can take comfort in the knowledge that for the upcoming year the Canadian heritage portfolio is saving \$76.1 million. That is a significant amount of money.

(1305)

In addition to these actual savings of money there will be other longer term efficiencies realized through the regrouping of the areas of responsibility from various departments. Broadly speaking, the Canadian heritage minister will work for the betterment of our country in matters relating to Canadian identity and values, cultural development, heritage and areas of natural or historical significance to this nation.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. members: Question.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): The question is on the amendment to the amendment. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the amendment to the amendment?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): All those in favour of amendment to the amendment will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): In my opinion the nays have it.

And more than five members having risen:

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): Pursuant to order made Thursday, October 27, 1994 the division stands deferred until Tuesday, November 1, 1994, at the expiry of the time provided for Government Orders.

*Government Orders***SOCIAL SECURITY PROGRAMS**

The House resumed from October 20 consideration of the motion that Bill C-54, an act to amend the Old Age Security Act, the Canada Pension Plan, the Children's Special Allowances Act and the Unemployment Insurance Act, be read the second time and referred to a committee; and of the amendment.

Mr. Stan Keyes (Hamilton West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I consider it a privilege to spend a few minutes discussing the provisions of Bill C-54 which deals with overpayment of old age security benefits and a time bar on the recovery of these overpayments.

This provision points out the challenges of administering our income security programs which comprise an extremely large enterprise, one which is vital to the well-being of more than six million Canadians.

To manage effectively a program that provides more than \$20 billion a year to six million clients is challenging enough but the Government of Canada must also maintain the reputation of the income security programs as effective, efficient and equitable. After all the purpose of the old age security and other benefits is to help provide Canadians with a just reward for a lifetime of work and service to family, community and society.

The old age security program is designed to assist those whose retirement income is minimal or even non-existent. It is designed to contain elements that alleviate poverty among senior citizens. Inevitably with such an extremely large group of programs there will be anomalies. People may receive more than their entitlement. People may receive less than they are entitled to.

A vital part of administering these funds of such formidable size is to remedy abnormalities in a manner which is effective, equitable and, where appropriate, compassionate.

(1310)

The Old Age Security Act contains restrictions which prohibit the recovery of substantial overpaid amounts and allow clients to retain unlawful gains. The act restricts the recovery of some overpayments aside from those arising from fraud or wilful misrepresentation. Collection can be made only for access moneys received in the current fiscal year plus the full previous fiscal year.

This is not the case with the Canada Pension Plan. It allows overpayments to be recovered regardless of the timeframe. The proposed amendment to the Old Age Security Act reads exactly this way: "Where a person has received or obtained a benefit payment to which the person is not entitled or a benefit payment in excess of the amount, the benefit payment to which the person is entitled, the amount of that benefit payment or the excess

amount, as the case may be, constitutes a debt due to Her Majesty".

This provision amends the Old Age Security Act to remove timeframe restrictions for recovery of overpaid moneys including payments for guaranteed income security and spouse's allowance. The change will provide greater accountability to the taxpayer and allow equal treatment of clients of old age security and the Canada Pension Plan.

Under this change the minister will have the discretion to collect the entire amount overpaid to a client rather than a limited amount. However, in keeping with the policies and practices of the income security programs there would be no change to the existing authority to remit overpayments in various cases. These would include cases of hardship where administrative costs exceed the debt or where the debt cannot be collected within the foreseeable future.

Another new amendment incorporated in Bill C-54 will extend the minister's authority to remit overpayments where there was administrative error or erroneous advice. As a result of this amendment, recoveries of incorrectly paid funds are estimated to be approximately \$1 million to \$2 million every year.

I should mention that the time restriction has never applied in situations where charges of fraud were laid and proved but of course there are only a handful of cases of that type. Nevertheless, this amendment will enhance the ability of government to administer the old age security program in keeping with justice and equity.

No concerned Canadian wants to deny old age security benefits to a senior citizen who is deserving and in a difficult financial situation. Nothing in this proposed amendment will change that. The removal of this time restriction on recovery brings the old age security provisions into line with those of the Canada Pension Plan and the Unemployment Insurance Act.

Earlier in this debate the hon. member for Hochelaga—Maisonneuve commented that the government will collect debts incurred 15 years ago on the basis of erroneous advice from the department. This comment does not recognize the minister's ability expanded in this Bill C-54 to forgive overpayments incurred in such circumstances.

These amendments taken together will provide the minister with the flexibility to forgive overpayments where that is merited and to pursue the recovery of overpayments where that is merited. That is surely what is desired as opposed to the previous rules which were arbitrary and inconsistent with other government programs.

Where administrators have made errors, overpayments are to be forgiven. Where persons have made incorrect claims, overpayments are to be recovered. However, the government is determined to merit the reputation of the income security

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programs as programs that respect both the taxpayer who provides these millions in benefits and the pensioner who deserves to be treated with sensitivity and dignity.

The old age security program is designed to help those who really need help. Through supplements, it is intended to help those senior citizens whose income is low. With more than six million people benefiting from all income security programs, there are bound to be anomalies.

I want to again stress that a vital part of administering these large sums of such formidable size is to remedy anomalies in a manner which is efficient, equitable and where appropriate compassionate. The amendment to remove time barriers to recover overpayments is an important provision and another reason why Bill C-54 merits the support of all members of this place.

(1315)

Mr. Randy White (Fraser Valley West, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate my hon. colleague on his introduction to Bill C-54.

I too rise in support of Bill C-54 and I want to start by talking a little about some of the problems with how government in the past has managed pension programs in general. There are a lot of pension programs that exist in this country today.

We have to have a complete understanding. There really is not anything any more important than looking after our seniors today, for they cannot and will not get jobs as we are trying to get for our young people. They generally would not be retrained into our society. They are not going for extra education and these are the people really who deserve a secure retirement.

One of the members opposite is referring to himself. I think we will look after him too and I will talk a little about the MPs pension plan in a few minutes and we will see how well we will look after him in the future.

These are the people who really deserve a secure retirement because they have earned it through paying taxes and through paying into the CPP and so on. I guess we have to ask here whether the government and that other party from Jurassic Park have really looked after the welfare of senior citizens of the past. When we talk about changes to old age security, CPP and so on in the future we are going to have to get into looking at some new, constructive ideas because as most people in this country know money is becoming of short supply for those kinds of programs and they are going to have to be dealt with.

I have some difficulty in getting some confidence that this government will deal with these programs in a new, modern, constructive way. This is after all a traditional party of which we have one left in the House. Traditional ideas we thought were going to be gone in years past and for the future are ideas like the Senate. The better part of this country today is asking that we have elected senators, that they be effective and that we have

equal representation in provinces. Yet this government still provides the patronage appointments to which most Canadians are opposed.

We talk time and time again about the MP pension plan. Virtually not a month goes by in this House when we do not complain about it. Yet no changes have been made. We are talking about tradition and how we get a government like this, a traditional party, to move ahead and make some constructive changes in CPP and old age security. We are running out of time on some of these programs and they really have to move ahead; laws and legislation like in the Young Offenders Act where the whole country really wants this traditional party here to move ahead with them and make tougher constructive changes. It has failed to do it time and time again.

What we have here I fear is another traditional party that is dealing with non-traditional problems like old age security and CPP which have to be changed.

Why would we expect this government to come up with new ideas? I guess maybe we do not and that is what we are here for. That is why we have come to this House, to try to infiltrate some changes throughout the system.

Old age security is what is called a non-contributory program. Individuals do not contribute to it. It comes from tax revenue. On one hand one might assume that we could cut that out because people had not contributed to it. That is not the fact. Over the years all the taxes paid into the government have been used in part to fund old age security which is good in measure. That will have to change somehow unless the government finds some revenue either by raising taxes, and we hope it does not do that, or cutting expenses and we know it is not doing that.

(1320)

The Canada pension plan is the contributory portion of pension for Canadians where the employer and the employee contribute.

To address old age security and CPP and future changes we must look at how the government manages its current pension plans. We know what they are. They are the MP pension plan, the military pension plan, the civil service pension plan and the RCMP pension plan. There are a number of them. Those plans should be covered under the Pension Benefits Standards Act. This act sets standards for pension plans in this country on the financing and the fund management. It was introduced in 1967 and amended by the Conservatives in 1987. The plan has four very good standards which actually should apply to all pension plans.

The first one is that the employers must ensure that dollars are held in trust. This is very basic and necessary for any pension plan. A pension fund administrator shall be put in place managed by a board, an organization that is charge of the fund. The administrator must be responsible for appointing somebody for accountability and then the fund must be prudently invested. It

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stands to reason that is the only way a good pension plan could be managed.

However, these standards that were in the standards act were intended to protect the interests of the plan members. Not surprising, however, Parliament exempted the federal government from these rules. Here we go with this kind of sanctimony. We will look after everybody else but ourselves. When this act came in and was modified in 1987, Parliament said that is okay for everybody else but we will not get involved in that portion, we will exempt ourselves from it. It did, with the military, civil service, RCMP and MP pension plans.

Consequently, there are problems with those plans. I am going to illustrate from these four plans what is wrong with the management and the ability to fund old age security and CPP.

The problem with that particular exemption is that total pension payments exceed the contributions. When you exempt yourself from these rules you start to go into the hole. You start into deficits. That we know is where we stand today. Today we have total liabilities for RCMP, military and civil service pension plans of \$94 billion, unfunded. It is carried in an account on the books of the government as an SPA, I believe, a special purpose account. It is a liability. It is not funded in trust as the Pension Benefits Standards Act so directs everybody else to do.

We pay out about \$6 billion to these three organizations, the military, civil service and RCMP. That comes directly from general revenues paid by the taxpayer.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): I regret that at this stage in debate on this particular piece of legislation members are entitled to 10 minutes without questions or comments.

Mr. White (Fraser Valley West): Mr. Speaker, that is too bad. I just got warmed up. I have not even had an opportunity to tell the government what I think of it today. I only did that yesterday.

We have to work on old age security and CPP, make no mistake about it with this government, and RRSPs as well.

(1325)

I am advising the government now to keep away from taxing RRSPs. It may be the one very good livelihood senior citizens have in this country. After 20 years of spending money carelessly by both Liberals and Conservatives there are very few dollars left in those pots to fund other pensions.

If that bank is broke, which it is, what has to happen here is that old age security and CPP must be the number one priority for funding. That means the government should attend to the

Pension Benefits Standards Act, try to get these in trust and try to get them funded.

[*Translation*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. members: Question.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): The question is on the amendment. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the amendment?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): All those in favour will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): In my opinion the nays have it.

And more than five members having risen:

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): Pursuant to order made on Thursday, October 27, 1994, a recorded division on the proposed motion stands deferred until Tuesday, November 1, 1994, at the end of the period provided for Government Orders.

[*English*]

Mr. Boudria: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I think you will find unanimous consent to proceed immediately to private members' hour notwithstanding the couple of minutes left.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): The House has heard the suggestion of the chief government whip. Is there unanimous consent to proceed to Private Members' Business?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

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[*English*]

RECALL ACT

The House resumed from June 14 consideration of the motion that Bill C-210, an act to provide for the recall of members of the House of Commons, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

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Mr. Ed Harper (Simcoe Centre, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, it is indeed a pleasure for me to rise today and speak in support of Bill C-210, a bill introduced by my colleague from Beaver River.

To my mind this is one of the most important bills that we may be discussing in this Parliament because it is a very small but important step in restoring confidence in the system and restoring trust in politicians.

I am particularly pleased to rise and speak on this bill today because I recall it as being one of the major reasons why I joined the Reform Party in reading over its policies and positions on political reform and on freer votes, referenda, citizens' initiative, recall.

Back in 1990 when I first was exposed to those policies they rang very true with me. I said yes indeed that is what is wrong with this country of ours today. Politicians have lost touch with the people they are representing and the system is in great disrepute.

(1330)

Recall is one part of political reform, but as I said earlier, it is a very important step in the direction to make politicians more accountable to the people who voted them into office. Referendums can encourage the common sense of the common people to be brought to bear on some of the major issues we are and will be facing in this 35th Parliament.

Canadians have lost faith in the system. They have lost trust in the politicians. The results of the last election in having 205 new members of Parliament elected to this House speaks very clearly to the feelings of the Canadian voters that there must be change. They are not happy with the status quo and we have to have some new directions.

Consider Meech Lake, followed by the Spicer commission, followed by the Charlottetown accord. During that period these things indicated very clearly that Canadians were saying: "We want change; we are not happy with the direction governments have been going in".

This applies particularly when I reflect on the Charlottetown accord. All major governments were supporting it; all of the major press were supporting it. However, the Canadian people saw through it and said: "No, this is not a good idea. This is not a good move". They rejected it. It was to the utter disbelief of the parties that the Canadian voters would stand up, see through the smoke-screen being presented to them and say: "No, this is not what we want. We have not had a voice in this process".

That was a turning point in Canadian politics and it was a turning point for the better. Politics in Canada will never be the same. The problem is that once credibility is lost, it is extremely difficult to get it back. Talk is not enough. It takes action. This

bill is going to provide some action, a step in that direction. Changes must be made.

I recall when I was campaigning. The door to door experience I have described was frightening. At door after door I am sure other members as well as myself were being met with the same reaction: "I am absolutely fed up with what has been going on up there in Ottawa. Why should I believe you? You are here at the door telling me what you want me to believe, what you think I want to hear. But you will go to Ottawa and you will do exactly as you are told, just as has been going on for years. I am fed up with it".

I encountered that at door after door. That level of cynicism really was disturbing. In a way it reinforced my desire to get involved in the system and hopefully bring about the change needed to restore the level of confidence that has been so sadly lacking.

I am building a case for the mistrust and the cynicism that is out there with the voters. I want to read some quotes from the very famous red book because it has been played so often during this first sitting. There are those who would suggest that the red book should have started out with the phrase once upon a time, but it does contain the odd pearl of wisdom.

I would like to take this opportunity to quote some of them. They will reinforce exactly what I am saying today in support of recall. On page 91 under "Governing with Integrity":

Canadians have always prided themselves on the quality of their democratic institutions. Yet after nine years of Conservative rule, cynicism about public institutions, governments, politicians, and the political process is at an all-time high. If government is to play a positive role in society, as it must, honesty and integrity in our political institutions must be restored.

The most important asset of government is the confidence it enjoys of the citizens to whom it is accountable. There is evidence today of considerable dissatisfaction with government and a steady erosion of confidence in the people and institutions of the public sector.

This erosion of confidence seems to have many causes: some have to do with the behaviour of certain elected politicians, others with an arrogant style of political leadership. The people are irritated with governments that do not consult them, or that disregard their views, or that try to conduct key parts of public business behind closed doors.

(1335)

On page 92 under "Parliamentary Reform" it states:

In the House of Commons, a Liberal government will give MPs a greater role in drafting legislation, through House of Commons committees. These committees will also be given greater influence over government expenditures. More free votes will be allowed in the House of Commons, and individual members of Parliament will be involved in an effective prebudget consultation process. We will establish mechanisms to permit parliamentary review of some senior order in council appointments.

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A lot of talk so far but little in the way of action.

Let me now go to page 93 under the title "Perspectives". This quote that is in the red book was actually taken from the Public Policy Forum, 1993:

Given the sustained and often angry criticism that has been widely expressed by the public in recent years, it is remarkable how little has been done by way of reform. Of all the grounds on which successive governments, together with MPs, could be charged with being unresponsive, none is more striking than the lack of response to unmistakable expressions of public dislike of the manner in which Parliament goes about its business. If Canadian parliamentarians are unwilling to effect changes, they must be prepared to accept a further loss of public regard. If, however, they are now ready to embrace reform, there are a number of avenues open to them.

The last quote is from page 93 of the red book. The source is the Royal Commission on Electoral Reform and Party Financing of 1992. It is entitled "Political Cynicism in Canada".

I will read out the quote and the percentage who agree with the statement: "I don't think that the government cares much what people like me think"; 72 per cent agreed with that statement. "Generally, those elected to Parliament soon lose touch with the people"; 79 per cent agreed with that statement. "Most candidates in federal elections make campaign promises they have no intention of fulfilling"; 82 per cent. "Most members of Parliament care deeply about the problems of ordinary people"; 62 per cent. "Most members of Parliament make a lot of money misusing public office"; 64 per cent.

The problems we have had with the Minister of Canadian Heritage this week illustrate there is a problem. Unfortunately, the government missed a great opportunity this week to show it meant to restore integrity and honesty to government. By not taking fast and appropriate action it has lost the credibility that is so heralded in its famous red book.

Let us get back to recall. Is there identified support for recall? There is a very definite yes in answer to that question. In October 1991 the province of British Columbia had a vote on whether to support recall and 81 per cent of the voters in that province responded in favour of recall. In the March 1994 Gallup poll 75 per cent of Canadians said yes to recall. In the province of Quebec 70 per cent supported recall. In the province of Ontario 78 per cent supported recall.

Let us go now to the question of party affiliation relative to the question of supporting recall. Liberal supporters, 76 per cent endorsed recall. BQ supporters, 76 per cent supported recall. Indeed, there is very strong support for recall.

In the first week of Parliament the need for recall was demonstrated by what happened in the riding of Markham—Whitchurch—Stouffville. The member was not good enough for the Liberal Party and was thrown out. The people in that riding now have no member or no way of getting at their member. Just this morning I presented another petition in the House with hundreds of names on it requesting that Parliament do some-

thing about this inability for constituents to get at a member who is not representing them.

I cannot understand this reluctance toward recall. I can only assume it is because members have not received the message that the voters want change. That has been demonstrated so clearly. They are still out of touch with voters. The people who pay our wages, our bosses, are telling us and demanding that change be made.

I spoke about the Spicer commission because it reinforces a lot of what I was saying. The final chapter in that report was not written by Mr. Spicer or any of his commissioners, but by one of the Canadians who was interviewed. What he said was: "No hyperbole or political hedge can screen any member of any legislature who thwarts the will of the people on this matter. The voters are watching and waiting". I think they are waiting for recall.

(1340)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Paul Crête (Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I welcome this opportunity to speak in the debate on the proposed act to provide for the recall of members of the House of Commons. This bill is a good example of an idea that has its merits but does not quite make it. The purpose is to ensure that the member is worthy of the mandate he received from his constituents. The problem has been with us since the beginnings of the democratic system. We have seen this in the past in many countries, and though people have tried to find a solution, they have failed to come up with satisfactory answers. In countries where recall exists, it very seldom occurs, but there are also some outlandish situations.

If we consider the bill before the House today, I will explain why I said it does not quite make it. It is certainly not attractive in its present form because, among other things, it opens the door to all kinds of political intrigue. I will give an example. If this bill is passed, it would give more power to party organizations. Take for instance, a riding where a member was elected with less than 50 per cent of the vote, or the case of an independent member, like, for instance our colleague here in the House who represents the riding of Beauce. I am not saying that politicians might actually do this, but the parties might get together and decide to start a petition to challenge a seat held by an independent member, who would not have the same political clout as these parties, and a new election would be called, not to challenge the performance of the member but just to win another seat. And this may have important repercussions, one way or another.

What started out as a good intention expressed by the Reform Party could have unacceptable consequences like giving even more weight to the party machine at the expense of the member representing his or her riding. In addition, according to the current legal interpretation of the political party financing

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legislation, if this act providing for the recall of members of the House of Commons went into effect, it would become an appalling form of lobbying for those who finance political parties, and who are not necessarily individuals. For example, companies, banks or unions on the other side of the fence could decide in a given situation to make a member lose his seat, not because of poor performance but because his ideas are different from theirs. In this regard, our legislation governing political party financing is not tight enough at the present time to allow us to put in place a concept such as the recall of members.

Another perverse element which is not in the legislation must be avoided, namely the systematic use of recall to remove members from the House. This bill provides that such petitions can be accepted 18 months after an election. Politicians could easily make systematic efforts to question the mandates of members from the other party, from the other side of the House, thus creating instability which is totally inconsistent with the goals and objectives of our parliamentary system. We cannot afford to transfer to a parliamentary system such as ours ideas which may have been successful in a different type of system but which would not have the same effect here. I think that these perverse effects must be avoided at all cost.

Something else to keep in mind is that we must not over-legislate, and in this regard I think that the Reform Party is contradicting itself. You do not solve a problem by passing a law and damming every little stream. In this Parliament, if the mandate of one or two individuals should be reconsidered because of something they did, I think that it is not necessary to pass a law that would have a major effect on the parliamentary system and the electoral system and unpredictable negative effects.

(1345)

My colleague from the Reform Party just gave the example of Charlottetown. If we had had such a law when the Charlottetown Accord failed and all of Canada started to recall all the members who had spoken in favour of that horrible agreement, I feel that we would have had a constitutional crisis and an even more obvious parliamentary crisis, especially since about a year passed between the Charlottetown Accord and the next federal election, the same time it would have taken to come up with something to challenge the mandates of the people who had been elected.

So, this solution does not seem viable, in my view. It does not seem like an appropriate solution to the problem which may be created by a member of Parliament who does not properly fulfill his mandate. Other forms of representations can be made and

actions can be taken by the constituents, without jeopardizing someone's mandate because of his ideas.

Let us not forget too that we sometimes have free votes on moral issues and on bills. Some pressure groups could conceivably resort to the recall process because of just one issue representing a very minor part of the work done by a member.

I also want to say a word on the short text—some 200 words—to justify the application for recall. We are in politics. We see the same reality from different perspectives. That text could take different forms and be subject to various interpretations, thus generating an instability which is not appropriate, considering that, in the next few years, Parliament will have to consider major constitutional changes.

It is because of the strength of our parliamentary institutions—and this must be recognized—that a party seeking a radical transformation of our country's political structure, can come here and express its views. We must ensure that this democratic process continues to exist. Indeed, that institution is still the best democratic tool available.

Let me mention a few issues which I consider more urgent regarding MPs' mandate. I already said it, but I will repeat it now: We must first ensure that we have a political party financing process act which is airtight. We must ensure that only individuals, and not corporate entities, can make contributions to a political party.

When you look at the list of the people who are presently contributing to the financing of political parties like the one currently in power or, in the past, the Conservative Party or any other party that is satisfied with following the letter of the law, you realize why their hands are tied in so many situations. You understand why, in the social program reform for example, government action is much more limited and softer than what the public expected. This is because this party's financial backers, if not handed control, at least exercise moral influence over it. When these backers are banks, unions, corporate bodies, the voters are not a priority and, in that sense, the intent of the Representation Act is distorted. Therefore, it appears to me that legislation to that effect is much more urgently required.

The second element on which I believe it appropriate to move very quickly is to make sure that when people are elected, they come here with a clear, well-defined mandate and that they respect it. In politics, people are always right in the end. We live in a society in which—the Conservative Party of Canada can attest to that—if political parties retreat in their ivory tower and forget about the people who brought them to power, they eventually pay dearly for it. In our political system, a four- to five-year term of office seems very reasonable.

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Each one of us, the 205 new members, knows it to be true. If, after 18 months in office, we were asked to perform as efficiently as those who have been fortunate enough to be here for two, three or four years, it would render the system less efficient. Contrary to the Reform Party's objective, this would further diminish voter confidence in the institutions which represent them.

(1350)

To conclude, I would say that what we have here is the age-old problem of democratic representation by delegation. It has been with us for a long time. The solution we are being offered is not the right one. I believe that we should give it some more thought. This bill should be dropped and instead we should start a reflection on a priority issue, the financing of political parties.

[English]

Mr. Jim Hart (Okanagan—Similkameen—Merritt, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise today to participate in the debate on Bill C-210 proposed by the member for Beaver River respecting the recall act.

In trying to find why we would need a bill such as this one in place in Canadian politics, I asked the Library of Parliament to do some research and give me examples of corruption and situations that may have been prevented if we had recall legislation like the one before us. I was amazed. My fax machine burned up for about a half hour with all the examples the library was sending me.

A December 30 article in the *Ottawa Citizen* refers to 18 members and ministers on the Liberal side of the House and on the Conservative side of the House who were implicated in such corruption. There was also more evidence in a June 28 article that reads: "Two PC MPs leave caucus pending probe, an RCMP investigation into the misuse of federal funds".

Another article that caught my eye states: "Prime Minister Kim Campbell has inherited the mandate of one of the most corrupt governments in Canadian history. Seldom have so many been caught doing so much for themselves".

These are examples of some of the things. I found it totally outrageous that the Canadian public has put up with nonsense like corruption charges against members, forged documents, shoplifting, kickback deals, ministers accepting \$2.5 million in loans from a friend who just happened to be a government contractor, questionable land deals, lavish spending while on government trips abroad financed by the taxpayer and conflict of interest charges. The Canadian public demands more from elected representatives.

Recall is the power of the people to petition for the holding of an election on the recall, the removal of a member of Parliament. It was first used in the American Articles of Confederation of 1777 and recall currently exists in 15 American states.

We hear criticism that if recall were in place we would have massive amounts of tie-ups in the process because of all the numbers that would be coming forward to the House.

From the best count I have been able to make of recall in the United States, I could only find seven state representatives, one state senator, two elected state cabinet officials and one governor. They are rather low figures and nothing to get too concerned about.

With accountability and open government high on the Canadian taxpayers' agenda, recall is direct popular participation in the administration of the law. No position should be considered too lofty or too dignified for this type of action. The position of a member of Parliament exists for and is financed by the people of Canada. The people should be able to remove any incumbent whose performance they consider unsatisfactory. The people should be able to remove any unsatisfactory MP or minister without turfing the whole governing party out of office.

One hon. member just mentioned a few minutes ago the red book. There are certain quotes in the red book that are pertinent to this. The red book on page 91 states:

If government is to play a positive role in society, as it must, honesty and integrity in political institutions must be restored.

This erosion of confidence seems to have many causes: some have to do with the behaviour of certain elected politicians, others with an arrogant style of political leadership.

(1355)

It would seem in principle that the Liberal Party is supportive of direct democracy in government.

Adopting recall is a way of introducing into the administration of the law the kind of democratic control that citizens' initiatives and referenda could bring to the making of law. Recall introduces a deterrent to and, as a last resort, a cure for arrogance, bias, corruption or incompetence among elected officials.

If the people had the power of recall we would not have an abusive MP pension plan. We would not have patronage. We would not have outrageous perks. We would not have an ear for special interest groups. We would not have cabinet ministers abusing their power as we have seen in the last couple of days.

If the people had the power through recall legislation we would have a higher public opinion of elected officials. We would have more accountability in government. We would have MPs representing their constituents instead of toeing the party line.

By passing Bill C-210 history will show that we did restore public confidence in government. To restore confidence in this place we must move toward a truly democratic system. We must be accountable in supporting Bill C-210 and introducing recall. Thereby we will establish the power of the people.

Let us examine the democratic option of recall and discuss its potential impact on the Canadian system of government and its electorate. Recall is a procedure that allows the voters to call their representatives to account before the end of their normal term, at a time of the voters choosing.

This has been criticized in some arenas but before the House affairs committee on September 7 there was testimony by Dr. Peter McCormick, a political scientist from the University of Lethbridge, as follows:

I think we have to reject the argument that voters would be discarding representatives every second week, that there would be recalls going on endlessly and constantly. In a democracy it should not be necessary to belabour this point. If we can trust the electors to show some wisdom and some judgment in electing people in the first place, surely it is not unreasonable to say that they will exercise similar wisdom and judgment in how often and to what purpose they use recall. If we cannot trust them to use recall then it is not clear why we trusted them to do the electing in the first place.

The recall process outlined in Bill C-210 essentially involves three stages: an application for recall, a recall petition and finally a byelection. I do not want to spend too much time on the actual workings of the bill because I do not have that much time. However I would like to talk a bit about the safety valves that are included in the bill.

First, the Clerk of the House will not accept a recall petition until the grace period of 18 months has passed since the last election, which applies both to newly elected and re-elected MPs. In the case of newly elected members, they would have a reasonable chance to establish a record of representing and serving their constituents.

Second, a recall petition can only be made once in a constituency during the life of an elected Parliament. This would prevent an MP being repeatedly harassed by an organized special interest group.

Third, the petitioners' official agent must report all contributions and expenditures related to the group's recall campaign, including a list of all people who made financial donations, thus limiting the lobbyist factor.

Fourth, the safety valve is the time limit for collection of recall petition signatures. This ensures that the issue that triggered the petition remains alive and significant for the later stages of the process.

Fifth, as an added precaution Bill C-210 incorporates several clauses that would ensure the official agent is operating above board by instituting an offence punishable on a summary conviction.

In closing I quote the words of Edmund Burke in his 1774 speech to the electors of Bristol:

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It ought to be the happiness and glory of a representative to live in the strictest union, the closest correspondence and the most unreserved communication with his constituents.

Their wishes ought to have great weight with him; their opinion high respect; their business unremitting attention. It is his duty to sacrifice his repose, his pleasure, his satisfaction, to theirs; and above all, ever and in all cases, to prefer their interests to his own.

(1400)

I urge all the members of this place to support Bill C-210.

Mrs. Diane Ablonczy (Calgary North, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure for me to stand in support of my colleague's bill today.

I want to say that I am very dismayed that none of the government members opposite has the courage to stand and talk about the concept of recall in this House.

As my colleague from Simcoe Centre has already stated, this is a measure that has very high support among the Canadian electorate. In other words, Canadians want us to be subject to recall. The members of this government will not even talk about it and that is a shame and not in the interests of Canadians.

Really the purpose of a recall mechanism is that Canadian democracy would benefit from the increased accountability of elected officials. Once again this week we have seen how very unaccountable elected representatives really are.

This government talks so loudly about integrity in government and how it was going to put a watchdog in place that would be accountable to Parliament. What has it done to provide for accountability of elected officials? What it has done is appoint a lapdog that is answerable only to the Prime Minister and is now being used as kind of a Delphic oracle when the Prime Minister needs some words of wisdom from a deep source to justify his actions.

Canadians are not satisfied with the level of accountability that their elected officials have. It needs to be corrected.

This idea of holding elected representatives accountable by some recall mechanism is certainly not something that has just been dreamed up by a few strange people in this country. The whole concept originated in ancient Athens which was the birthplace of democracy.

Ms. Catterall: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I want to draw to your attention and to the attention of the House that the member speaking has commented on the participation of the government in this debate, suggesting it is some kind of cowardice that prevents us from speaking on this bill.

In this hour of debate we have chosen to leave the debate to the Reform Party hoping that it will display through its speeches how foolish an idea this is.

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The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): Order. With the greatest of respect I do not believe at this point that we have a point of order.

I was attentive to the remarks of the hon. member with regard to the issue raised by the government deputy whip but I conclude that there is no point of order and I ask the member for Calgary North to resume her intervention.

I do not know that there was a point of order. It is a matter of debate. At this point the floor has been granted to the hon. member for Calgary North.

Mrs. Ablonczy: Mr. Speaker, I hope that the government will engage in debate on this issue as time goes on.

In the birthplace of democracy in Athens, the accountability of elected officials was through a process of recall which was by way of ostracizing wayward politicians. Wayward politicians were ostracized and not allowed to participate in public life and they were also sometimes exiled from the country.

I think a lot of Canadians would feel that we should go right back to original democratic principles sometimes.

Also recall has been a facet of the Swiss system since before its formal adoption in the 19th century. In the 19th century recall was by another name.

(1405)

It was known as the imperative mandate. It is a device whereby elected officials can be subjected at any time to the review of the people who put them in office and I would suggest that this makes eminent sense in light of what democracy really is.

I remind Canadians again that democracy is rule by the people. We are simply the representatives of the people here in this Chamber. We are here because they have chosen us, given us the honour and the responsibility to represent their concerns, their wishes and their interests and carry them out on their behalf.

A lot of times Canadians feel that once elected, representatives simply disconnect from the people who put them in place, pay the bills and whose future is affected by their decisions.

I would also point out that recall is truly democratic because citizens can only recall their own representative, not someone else's. It is the people who put a representative in place, who have the wisdom to elect that representative in the first place, who should be able to have the say as to whether that representative continues in the position where the electors have put them.

I want to point out to members of this House that every other Canadian is subject to recall. If you are in a job or a position and you do not do it properly you will be booted out. You will be replaced. You will be given a pink slip. Yet somehow 295 Canadians who have a very important job, a very critical job, a

job on which hangs the future and the well-being of thousands and thousands of Canadians, feel that somehow they should not be subject to the same type of representation and accountability and recall as every other Canadian. This simply does not make sense and it should be rectified.

People are cynical and disrespectful of politicians because they do not open themselves up to this evaluation. It is an axiom that if you want trust from others you must trust them in response. We hear this all the time when we are counselled about dealing with our children, dealing with staff in management situations and in all facets of human relationships. Mutual trust is so important.

Yet it appears that members of this House are not prepared to entrust their future and evaluation of their performance and of the adequacy of what they are doing to the Canadian public. This does not make sense and we need to re-examine our belief in the common sense of the people who elected us in the first place.

When we asked the Prime Minister of this present government about his support for the concept of recall his response was that Canadians have the ability to recall their representative in an election.

Canadians know well that a general election is not the most effective time for a performance review because that is the time when so many issues are at stake with not only individual representatives but really the party and the leadership. Other kinds of programs and policies are on the table. A performance review is such a very small part of all of the factors that electors have to weigh at the time of an election that it is not fair to say that is the definitive moment when electors should be deciding whether a particular candidate is satisfactory.

MP recall, I believe, would dramatically change the sensitivity of MPs to issues by shifting the balance from parties to people and that is where it really belongs. If a backbench MP could say to the government whip and to the front benches "I am sorry, I would like to support this measure. I know you are telling me to but if I do I am going to get turfed out back home because this is simply not supported by the people I represent", think of how much healthier it would be and how much more meaningful real legislation would be if it had to have the real support of the people we speak for and vote for.

That would be one of the healthiest changes we could bring to do something to really address the issues of the country in a meaningful way, in a way that meets with the approval of the people we represent.

(1410)

There are so many reasons why we need to have the courage and the faith in the Canadian public to bring forward these direct democracy measures that I urge this House to reconsider, especially members on the other side, their resistance to moving in this direction and to support my colleague's bill on recall of representatives.

Private Members' Business

Ms. Marlene Catterall (Ottawa West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I accept your ruling on the point of order. However inadvertently I do believe that the member who just spoke has provided some incorrect information to the House and I do want to put on record a correction in the context of speaking on the motion of the member for Beaver River.

The member has suggested that Liberal members of Parliament are somehow avoiding this debate. To this point an equal number of Liberal and Reform Party members have spoken in this debate. It is an ongoing debate. It is not just this particular hour. Four Liberal members of Parliament spoke on the issue and four Reform members of Parliament spoke on the issue.

I think that indicates clearly our interest in this debate. Nonetheless, this issue of a recall is a matter of Reform Party policy and so today we did feel that we wanted to leave the floor to the members of the Reform Party to explain their policy to Canadians.

However, having been challenged to enter the debate I am not going to by any means give up that opportunity.

I have spoken on this issue before in this House but I am pleased to do so again if the Reform Party members do not wish to use the full-time we wanted to accord them the courtesy of.

I have compared this legislation to a kind of instantaneous divorce and suggested that when I chose a spouse and I think when most people choose a spouse they do so very carefully and with great forethought, and they make a long term commitment to that relationship. Because it is a long term commitment, they tend to choose very carefully and take their choice very seriously and recognize that there will be in any relationship, a marriage or an elected representative, some good times and some bad times.

As I said at that time, I am sure that in 33 years there have been many times when had instant divorce been available either my husband or I would have taken advantage of it. Looking back on 33 years we will conclude that all in all the good times outweighed the bad and we are glad we stuck with it.

Participatory democracy is more than paying a buck to pick up the phone and register your opinion without the responsibility to engage in dialogue with others who perhaps have different opinions, or to consider other interests involved in the opinion you are expressing.

It is very easy to selfishly say "this is my opinion". It is not so easy to say "I have an opinion but I also want to know what the impact of that opinion is on other people. I want the opportunity to engage in dialogue with them about the pros and cons and the

effects this will have on our society as a whole and, the bottom line, what is good for the country".

Members express a lot of concern about special interest groups. Frankly, one of my concerns about this legislation is that it does very much put members of Parliament at the mercy of very special interest groups that have both the social standing and the economic means to organize to unseat a member of Parliament because they do not like a decision that member of Parliament made. This has happened in many jurisdictions around the world. Sometimes that special interest group is the military which manages to unseat a whole government with disastrous results for its society.

(1415)

Recall in fact has the potential to produce a very selfish citizenry who look at every vote from the point of view of what is in their interest and whether the member is serving their interest. It is not: Is this member serving the interests of the community or the country at large? Is this member sensitive to interests that are not his or her own? Are they concerned not only about today but about tomorrow and the next generation? That is what we are here for. It is not to please people in the very short term. We are here to try and listen to our constituents and do what is best for them, for our country and for all citizens.

This government has taken significant measures to ensure that in fact democracy is not simply a question of what happens at the ballot box and then go away and forget your constituents and they forget you. We have done our best to introduce ongoing participation in the democratic process.

I want to say one final word about caucus. I do not know how the Reform Party caucus operates. I do know that every Wednesday morning we in the government caucus have the opportunity to freely and openly express our point of view to our Prime Minister and to one another. Together we resolve those differences of opinion we have. When we come in here we do what we believe is in the interests of the country.

Finally, we made a commitment as a government. We made numerous commitments to the country during an election campaign. We want to be able to keep those commitments. We are working at that day in and day out. We need to have some solidarity of caucus to do that because that is what Canadians expect of us.

Let me just return to my main point in rising today. In the first hour of debate on this bill on April 29, 1994 there were four Liberal speakers and one Reform speaker. There have only been three Reform speakers today.

Miss Grey: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I would like to clarify a lot. First of all I would like to just say that this bill was debated in February, not April. February was the beginning of this debate—

Private Members' Business

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): Order, order. If the member has a point of order relating to another matter of which she has given an indication, would she please get to that matter quickly.

Miss Grey: Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask to speak briefly under the right of reply under Standing Order 44(2). I believe we have time as we go to about 28 minutes after the hour.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): Let me just see if I can be helpful. The debate when it began earlier this day had 45 minutes left on it. Now the request from the member for Beaver River is under a standing order concerning which is commonly referred to as right of reply. Where a member of the House moves a substantive motion the House of course recognizes that that person under right of reply is the last one to speak on the debate which closes the debate.

I believe the hon. member for Beaver River is asking the House for unanimous consent to have, I will arbitrarily select a figure, two minutes to close the debate and then I must put the question.

Is there unanimous consent to allow the member for Beaver River who moved the motion to close the debate?

Ms. Catterall: Yes, Mr. Speaker, then the debate closes without unanimous consent?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): Yes, the debate will close two minutes from the time the member for Beaver River begins to speak and I will put the question forthwith. Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Miss Deborah Grey (Beaver River, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to just close off this debate by saying how much I appreciate members who have spoken in favour of this bill. The member for Ottawa West called it a foolish idea when she rose in her place. They may think it is a foolish idea but I am here to say that the Canadian public, even Liberals who have been polled across the country, hardly think this is a foolish idea.

What the Canadian public thinks is foolish are the people in this Chamber who are completely immune to job security, completely immune to being put forward to somebody who would say: "You are not doing your job, you are not acting responsibly".

The member for Ottawa West spoke about good times and bad times in a marriage. She likened this bill to an instant divorce.

Nothing could be further from the truth. There are many provisions in this bill to be safeguards for that.

This is something that is going to carry on over a period of days, weeks, even months. A person who has been a member of Parliament for 18 months has had a chance to prove themselves. That is hardly an instant divorce.

This bill calls for 50 per cent plus 1 of the number of voters who voted in the last election. That is not something that can be obtained instantly to call for this instant divorce.

I will wrap up my comments by saying how sad I find it that people on the government side refer to this whole thing as just something that is foolish, that they have spoken about it more than we have. May I draw the House's attention to the fact that the Liberals said today they have no more speakers on this. The member got up without knowing her facts about the bill, making comments about it.

I would urge this government to support—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): Order. Pursuant to Standing Order 93, the time provided for debate has expired.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): In my opinion the nays have it.

And more than five members having risen:

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): Pursuant to order made Thursday, October 27, 1994, the division stands deferred until Tuesday, November 1, 1994, at the expiry of the time provided for Government Orders.

This House stands adjourned until Monday next at 11 a.m. pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 2.22 p.m.)

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