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Monday, October 23, 1995

Speaker: The Honourable Gilbert Parent

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Monday, October 23, 1995

The House met at 11 a.m.

Prayers

[*English*]

POINTS OF ORDER

BILL C-106

Mr. Bob Ringma (Nanaimo—Cowichan, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the *Journals* of Thursday, October 19 show the vote on Bill C-106 was deferred by the chief government whip to today at 5.30 p.m. pursuant to Standing Order 45. However, according to Standing Order 45(6)(a):

A division deferred on Thursday is not held on Friday, but is instead deferred to the next sitting day, at the ordinary hour of daily adjournment.

The next sitting day is today and the ordinary hour of daily adjournment is 6.30 p.m., not 5.30 p.m.

The chief government whip cannot unilaterally defer a vote from Thursday to Friday to Monday to any other time but the ordinary hour of daily adjournment, to wit 6.30 p.m. He could do it pursuant to Standing Order 45(7) but as you know, Mr. Speaker, he would need consent from the three whips for that.

He did not ask me so that leaves him with only one option which is unanimous consent. If it was done by unanimous consent the records would indicate that. The records show the vote was deferred pursuant to Standing Order 45.

Mr. Speaker, if you would also check *Hansard* and the video for that day you would find that unanimous consent was not sought. In fact the government whip was not in his seat to be in a position to ask for unanimous consent; he was in front of the Speaker's chair. As you know, Mr. Speaker, it is from there that he asks that votes be deferred according to the authority granted him under the standing order. The standing orders in this case do not give him the authority to defer a vote from Thursday to 5.30 p.m. today.

It may not even be necessary for you to rule, Mr. Speaker. The problem can be solved if the House gives its consent to have the vote at 5.30 p.m., which consent I and the Reform Party are prepared to give.

My concern is not really with the time of the vote. The point is we should be careful about following the rules. Our distinguished table officer, Stanley Knowles, once said that the opposition has only the rules for its protection, hence the authorities on parliamentary procedure emphasize the great importance to the opposition of the only protection it has, the protection of the rules.

Mr. Peter Milliken (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is quite right in his vigilance in seeing that the rules are correctly applied and interpreted. I commend his efforts in this regard.

I note that he is not objecting to the fact that the vote is scheduled for 5.30 p.m. this afternoon. I submit that the decision which the Speaker made at the time of the request last week was correct.

I refer the hon. member to Standing Order 45(5)(a)(ii):

During the sounding of the bells, either the Chief Government Whip or the Chief Opposition Whip may ask the Speaker to defer the division. The Speaker then defers it to a specific time, which must be no later than the ordinary hour of daily adjournment on the next sitting day that is not a Friday. At that time, the bells sound for not more than fifteen minutes.

When the request was made on Thursday it was deferred in accordance with this standing order to the next sitting day that was not a Friday, which was Monday, at a time not later than the ordinary hour of daily adjournment. In other words, the chief government whip, who I believe made the request last Thursday, made it in accordance with Standing Order 45(5)(a)(ii) in requesting that it be deferred until Monday at 5.30 p.m. I believe he had that right under that standing order.

I know that Standing Order 45(6)(a) deals with Friday divisions. It was intended as a rule to deal with divisions which might otherwise take place on Fridays, in saying that it went to the ordinary hour of daily adjournment on Monday. In respect of Thursday votes, that was intended as an explanation. However, the rule which allows the time to be fixed was set in Standing Order 45(5), not in Standing Order 45(6).

No doubt the hon. member makes a very neat point. However he has missed the other part of the rule, which in my submission applies in this case. That is the rule to allow the chief government whip or the chief opposition whip to set a time earlier than the ordinary hour of daily adjournment on any day when a vote is deferred.

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It would be incongruous if the rule relating to Thursday divisions was different from that relating to divisions deferred on any other day. If, for example, a division is demanded today, the chief government whip or the chief opposition whip may defer the division to any time tomorrow not later than the ordinary hour of daily adjournment. It would be incongruous if the rule were interpreted, as the hon. member has suggested, that where a division is demanded on a Thursday it must go to 6.30 p.m. on Monday and not to any intermediate time. It cannot go to Friday. That much the rule is clear on.

I submit that Standing Order 45(5) allows for discretion in asking for a vote any time during the day on Monday, assuming that Monday is the next sitting day, no later than the ordinary hour of daily adjournment. That is the purpose of the rule, in accordance with the interpretation which has been placed on it over many years. The decision which was made last Thursday to defer the vote until 5.30 p.m. today by the Chair on request was absolutely correct.

(1110)

Mr. Ringma: Mr. Speaker, for today, as I have said, we are quite happy to accept 5.30 p.m. as the time for the vote. I submit it is your prerogative to examine the case put forward today versus that of the government benches to see what the technicality is.

The Speaker: I thank both members for their intervention on this matter. I have re-read the rules. What I would like to do at this point with your consent is have a brief look at the tapes and to revisit *Hansard*. I will rule formally later this day.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[English]

REGIONAL RATES OF PAY

Mr. Ron MacDonald (Dartmouth, Lib.) moved:

That, in the opinion of this House, the government should consider abolishing the Regional Rates of Pay, now in force for certain federal government employees, in accordance with its stated policy of pay equity.

He said: Mr. Speaker, it is a good way to start off on a Monday morning, dealing with an issue that is not just temporal or philosophical. This is an issue that fundamentally affects far too many public servants right across our country.

I do not know if it is luck or what it is, but this is the third time in two Parliaments I have been lucky enough to have my motion drawn for debate. The first time was in the second session of the last Parliament, in June 1990 and again in the third session in September 1991 a similar motion was also drawn for debate.

It is an issue that is near and dear to my heart. It is an issue that has affected, over the years, tens of thousands of federal employees. And it is an issue, once again, that I believe should be brought to the attention of the people who are elected to represent these public servants. As members of Parliament we are supposed to be affirming in the House the equality of employees, the equality of individuals, the equality of opportunity and the equity of people's labour.

I will talk a little about the regional rates of pay so that people understand exactly what they are. In years gone by, the federal government through the collective bargaining process, came to an agreement with its federal public employee unions that there should be regional rates of pay.

This was done at a point in time when the economies were much different than they are today. It was done at a time when one could argue that there were vast differences in economic conditions in various parts of the country, say in Winnipeg, in Halifax, in Sydney and St. John's, Newfoundland.

As total or global packages were negotiated it was agreed that there should be regional rates of pay. It meant that employees of the federal government who did a similar or identical job would get paid at a different rate based on where they lived.

As time went on, initially the rates grew in numbers. With the development of our economy, with the genesis of the economy and the consolidation of transportation infrastructure across the country, it became increasingly apparent that to continue a discriminatory wage practice based solely on a single factor of the employee living in a certain area was clearly discriminatory.

Over the last 15 years through successive collective agreements each and every time there has been the global negotiation, the number of regional rates has collapsed.

They have gone from a high of 35 or 40 down to today where only 8 or 9 regional rates of pay are left. That is solid recognition that individuals' pay should be based on their qualifications and the job they do and not on where they live. Their fundamental wage package should not be based on where they live any more than it should be based on their language, colour, gender or culture. It is discriminatory. Today it still stands as a discriminatory practice. What does this mean? It means quite a bit to the people who are affected by these discriminatory wage rates.

(1115)

During the 1988 federal campaign one of the big issues in the Halifax—Dartmouth area was dealing with the general trades and labour group at the ship repair unit in Halifax. Its members were in a legal strike position. Treasury Board and the Tory government of the day in their haste to go to the electorate forgot to designate them as essential employees. Therefore for the first time ever the potential was that those employees might be in a strike position.

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One major stumbling block for those unionized workers in the negotiations going into the campaign was the regional rate of pay. They were doing the same job at the ship repair unit in Halifax as was being done in British Columbia. They had the same job classifications, the same jobs and were working on the same classes of ships, but in some cases the wage differential was as high as 28 per cent.

The regional rate of pay was made an issue in the campaign, that it was a discriminatory practice. They were not seeking a commitment from the government of the day to collapse it all at once. They wanted a commitment that it would be recognized over the next one or two collective agreements that the rate should be collapsed.

In 1989 a ships crews strike tied up the St. Lawrence Seaway. The government was not concerned until there was a freeze-up and the possibility that commerce going up the St. Lawrence Seaway would stop. At that time the ships crews strike caused legislation to come before this place to break the strike and put them back to work.

What was the issue that caused that ships crews strike? It was the wage differential between the two regional rates. There was a west coast rate and an east coast rate and the dividing line went right down the middle from the Arctic Ocean. Conceivably, if a ship was in trouble in the Arctic it could be responded to by ships crews from either the east coast or the west coast. If they both got to the troubled ship at the same time, there was as much as a 20 per cent or 25 per cent wage differential. They were doing the same jobs on the same ships on the same high seas, sometimes in 15-metre swells. They were going out to save lives and there were two different wage rates which were based on where they lived.

How much money did they get? This whole strike was caused because the ships crews from the east coast region were making between \$19,000 and \$21,000 a year. They wanted their pay package to go up to what it was on the west coast, about \$22,000 to \$23,000 a year. That was what caused the strike.

When it went to binding arbitration after the legislation passed the House, the first thing that happened with the tripartite panel was that it collapsed the regional rate of pay. It saw it as discriminatory. The panel then went on to other non-monetary issues. The history with the last three or four cases that went to binding arbitration where the regional rate was an issue is that it was immediately seen as discriminatory and was collapsed.

The east coast ships crews after they saw what happened at the tribunals told me: "The next time we are not going to bargain in good faith. We will just tie it up and hope it goes to binding arbitration because the binding arbitration process will find the rates discriminatory and will collapse them".

There is a principle here which we should listen to carefully. It is the principle of equal pay for work of equal value. That is it, straight, clean and simple. Some will argue that if you live in Halifax you should get paid less than if you live in Winnipeg. If that is the case, why are 91 per cent of federal employees in Canada paid under national rates of pay? That means that while the ships crews or the ship repair unit charge hand in Halifax get paid up to 28 per cent less than their west coast counterparts, other employees of the federal government are working in the same area and are getting identical rates of pay as their counterparts who are doing identical jobs in Toronto, Sudbury, North Bay, Victoria, Vancouver and St. John's.

(1120)

It does not make sense. It cannot be argued that a regional rate of pay has to be maintained so that it does not disrupt the local private labour market when at the same time 91 per cent of the employees are on national rates of pay. It simply does not make sense and is discriminatory.

The government of the day of which I am a member will say that we are in a period of restraint. I understand that. Collective bargaining was suspended in the 1994 budget. That was not something I supported then and it is not something I support today. It is wrong. I support the collective bargaining process. I said it when that legislation came forward in the House and I will say it again today.

The government indicated that once it got beyond its \$900 million or \$1 billion in savings which it was trying to accommodate by the wage freeze and the suspension of collective bargaining, any further savings would be reallocated back into the pay packet. It would perhaps talk about the increments but certainly it would look at some of the pay equity issues.

I implore the government today to see this not as one of those issues that affects just a few people. This is an issue of pay equity. Just as the government has committed itself at the earliest opportunity to address those inequities in pay equity as it is traditionally defined, I ask the government today to also extend that definition to regional rates of pay.

What does it mean? The best numbers I have are from September 1994 and they have changed. In September 1994 there were 211,823 employees on the federal public service payroll. There were nine groups that were still under regional rates of pay which amounted to 23,233 people. That means 9 per cent of the Public Service of Canada is being discriminated against based on no other factor than where they live.

Should we tell the charge hand down in Halifax who is being paid 13.7 per cent less than the west coast charge hand that he should work only 86.3 per cent as hard as the individual on the west coast? Should the general trades and labour individual who is paid 13.2 per cent less work 13.2 per cent less hard? No. The performance evaluations they face are exactly the same no

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matter where they live. I submit that their pay rate should also reflect that similarity.

How much would it cost? To completely eliminate regional rates of pay in one round of negotiations would cost the government less than 1 per cent of its total pay envelope. It would cost less than 1 per cent to stop discriminating against 9 per cent of its federal employees.

As the government moves toward a time when it can reinstate collective bargaining, when it can start treating public servants with the type of respect they deserve, one of the number one priorities is pay equity. One of the number one priorities within pay equity is addressing the discriminatory practices of regional rates of pay.

Looking around the Chamber there are members from all over the country. There are members from the west coast, from the great province of Quebec, from New Brunswick, from Saskatchewan, from Ontario. There are members from every province and territory in this place. All of us are paid the same based on the job we do for the people of Canada, not based on the place we represent.

I close by urging members of the House to agree with the motion before us. Tell the government it is imperative that the horrendous discriminatory practice of regional rates of pay must go and must go quickly.

Mr. Mike Scott (Skeena, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I listened with interest to the member for Dartmouth's comments. While I understand his motives I certainly disagree with some of the arguments he raised.

In looking at the different regions in Canada, very quickly it is found that there are substantial differences in the cost of living for people in various regions. For example, in Vancouver the cost to acquire and maintain a house is much higher than in rural British Columbia or rural Saskatchewan. Looking at the cost of living from region to region, some people may do very well on \$35,000 or \$40,000 a year. However, other people are just skimping by on that kind of wage simply because so much of their earnings are going into their cost of living, particularly their housing.

(1125)

One size fits all does not and cannot work for a country the size of Canada. This is a huge nation geographically with hundreds of thousands of square miles of land. There are different realities in all parts of Canada. We cannot impose a one size fits all standard on a nation this size. That is why the collective bargaining process has recognized this disparity in the cost of living and why we have the differences in pay rates. I would argue it is not a discriminatory practice, but rather a

recognition of the reality of the cost of living in Canada by region.

If we are to impose this kind of a one size fits all standard and do away with regional differences in pay, the people who are currently paid less to reflect the reality of their lower cost of living are going to benefit greatly. However, the people who are to be the losers are the ones at the top end of the scale right now who require their income to maintain their households and their cost of living.

The member and the government have said that they want to run the government like a business. We agree with that. We think governments should be run like a business. I come from a business background and I know what it is like. In the construction company I formerly owned, people were working in different parts of British Columbia. The pay scales differed to reflect the reality of where they worked. For example, people were working in camps far away from home in areas that were remote and expensive to live in. Their pay scale was altogether different from that of people who could get up in the morning in the community they resided in and go to work.

If we are to run government like a business we have to understand that the method of dealing with employees has to be reflective of that. We cannot adopt a one size fits all standard if we are to run government like a business. We have to look at it from the point of view of what makes sense.

The other major concern I have with this motion is that it could be perceived by some as the thin edge of the wedge. Is this the beginning of an imposed minimum wage right across the nation? Will we have a minimum wage level established based on the most prosperous regions where the cost of living is highest and then have that imposed on the entire nation? There is real concern that may be the direction we will be going in if we adopt this kind of philosophy and attitude.

With the greatest of respect to the member, I think I understand his motivation, but I certainly disagree with his arguments. For that reason we on this side of the House, certainly myself, will not be supporting this motion.

Mr. Dennis J. Mills (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, because of the strong interest from government members in supporting this motion and in supporting our colleague from Dartmouth who has been working on this motion for many years, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Labour and I will be splitting our time. We will each have five minutes.

I congratulate my colleague for once again bringing this motion to the floor of the House of Commons. Whenever there is a motion in the House which deals with national standards, I always try to stand and speak in favour of the motion.

(1130)

I am a passionate believer that Canada needs more, not less, regulation, programs and activities wherein the national standards of the country will be promoted and upheld. I happen to believe national standards represent the galvanizing feature or the glue that holds the country together.

Mr. Scott (Skeena): More regulation, more government.

Mr. Mills (Broadview—Greenwood): With respect to the member for Skeena, I did not say more regulation. I said regulations that have national standards.

I come from industry as well and I have always favoured less red tape, much more efficiency in government and less duplication. However I believe the national government has a role to play in the country. I for one am totally frustrated. I do not feel comfortable with the offloading and dismantling program we are going through.

The member has put forward a very good bill. Its impact on the treasury of Canada will be minimal versus the positive output from it.

I say to the member for Skeena that I do not ever remember any member of Parliament on the government side saying that government should be run like a business. Government cannot be run like a business. If we are talking about efficiencies, absolutely, but I come from business and the difference between government and business is that business is only interested in earnings per share per quarter. It is only interested in profit. That is not the government's bottom line. Our bottom line, rather than the business bottom line, is people. We are interested in people. Business is only interested in profit as a bottom line. That is a big difference.

It is nothing personal with the member for Skeena. It is an ideological view I have. Governments, and I cite my own province right now, are becoming so lean in their attitude that the people factor is really being hurt. We are here as members of Parliament not to look out for the advantaged. We are here to look out for the disadvantaged. I get a sense that governments are becoming so businesslike that we are almost becoming mean as governments.

Mr. Harper (Simcoe Centre): No.

Mr. Mills (Broadview—Greenwood): The member whom I have immense respect for from Orillia says no. I am concerned about this matter. We should be skating with our heads up.

I am happy to stand in the House to support the bill. I campaigned in my first election in Broadview—Greenwood for a strong national government. I believe the best way to help disadvantaged regions and people who are disadvantaged is to make sure the national government is strong enough to ensure that those regions receive the same treatment as downtown

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Toronto, whether it be in education, hospital care, service to the public or whatever.

I am happy to continue that thought process here. I salute my colleague from Dartmouth for making sure the government holds true to its red book commitment to be the government that rebuilds national standards in the country. What better area than to start with the Public Service of Canada which used to be recognized as the best public service in the world. The way we have been battering it around lately, it needs confidence and support to once again become the greatest public service in the world.

I salute my colleague from Dartmouth for putting us back on the right path.

(1135)

[*Translation*]

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Joliette, on a point of order.

Mr. Laurin: Mr. Speaker, I do not know how much time is left. Normally speeches are 10 minutes long. When they are 20 minutes long, there are 10 minutes for questions and comments. And I think the 10 minutes must be nearly up. It would be difficult to allow an extra 5 minutes, as the member across the way announced earlier.

I think that when 10 minutes are used up, by one party or the other, it is a total of 10 minutes.

[*English*]

The Deputy Speaker: On the question about dividing the 10-minute time period in private members' hour into two 5-minute blocks, Standing Order 43 refers to government business and giving notice to the Chair through the whip and so on.

Given that we have only six people who wish to speak it would be better if the hon. parliamentary secretary would finish his 10 minutes. Then we will move across the floor and back to his colleague.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Laurin: Point of order, Mr. Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Joliette, again on a point of order.

Mr. Laurin: Mr. Speaker, I beg your pardon, but you have just told the parliamentary secretary that he might finish his 10 minutes. He is not entitled to 10 minutes, because the Reform Party has already used up a certain number of minutes. All that he can use is what remains after the remarks by the Reform Party member.

Otherwise, provided a member announced his intentions in advance, he could book in advance all of the time reserved for a party by indicating that the 10 minute period would be shared with a colleague, if he were the first speaker.

Private Members' Business

I believe that you should acknowledge everyone in turn, without going beyond 10 minutes.

The Deputy Speaker: The parliamentary secretary has 3 or 4 minutes more, if he wishes to use them.

[English]

Mr. Mills (Broadview—Greenwood): Mr. Speaker, today being Monday we are heading into the final week of the referendum. It is nice to hear a positive spirit coming from the Bloc. Hopefully it is a sign as we go through the final moments that Bloc Quebecois members and some of their constituents are starting to realize that being a part of this great Chamber, being a part of Canada, is a much more exciting challenge and a much more worthwhile one than separating and going on their own.

Once again, my commitment is to national standards, which is essentially what the bill is all about. We are reinventing ourselves as a government and a country. We have to look at every opportunity presented to us to keep the country working. Often it is public service motivated because the Public Service of Canada touches every aspect of the economic life of the country. A vibrant, forward looking, well motivated public service plays an essential role in ensuring the economy and the policies related to the economy of the country are the right ones.

The bill respects the contribution the Public Service of Canada makes, so let us all get behind it.

[Translation]

Mr. René Laurin (Joliette, BQ): Mr. Speaker, let me begin by thanking the hon. member opposite for acknowledging my positive spirit. He is extremely perspicacious, and I would remind him that yes is the response associated with positivism.

I have listened with a great deal of attention and interest to what my colleague from Dartmouth has had to say. Let me congratulate him as well on his sincere concern with this problem. I feel that efforts must be made to ensure wage equity in all areas. It is a desirable thing for there to be wage equity, no discrimination according to gender, skin colour, race, religion, or geographical location.

(1140)

Because, regardless of where a job is done, I am thinking for instance of a plumber who fixes a sink, whether in Trois-Rivières or James Bay, obviously it is the same job. Where this causes certain problems, and I think that certain differentiations need to be made, the issue cannot be decided as simply as that. Serious problems crop up in trying to attain this principle of equality.

Of course, one could say: equal pay for equal work. But there are often differing incidental expenses in performing that work which need to be taken into consideration.

The hon. member himself just now said that all members of this House are paid the same because that is normal, we all do the same work. I am sure that a member from British Columbia is just as good at his job as a member from Quebec, and vice versa. Except that the member from British Columbia who comes to do his job here in the House is given points for travel time, just as I, as a Quebec member, am given points when I come to do my job in the House, but the value of these points is not the same.

We have the same salary, but when the member leaves Vancouver to do his job here in the House, his plane ticket costs a lot more than the mileage I would be allowed to come and do my job in the House. If the member had to pay this out of his own salary, he would be at a disadvantage. Today, he has the same salary, because someone else pays for incidentals and costs directly related to his job in Ottawa.

The same applies to a plumber. Suppose a company is doing work at James Bay. If the company wants to attract qualified employees to James Bay to do certain jobs, such as electricians or plumbers, the individual who agrees to go to work in a remote area where his expenses will be higher will insist that by the end of the week he should have about the same net salary as his counterpart in Montreal. The hon. member did not mention this in his speech.

I refer to remote areas, but we could also talk about isolated areas. When someone is asked to go to work in a location that is not easily reached except by plane, for instance, this individual will spend more to get to his job, in addition to suffering the inconvenience of isolation.

Working in an isolated area is worse than working in a remote area, and there should be some compensation. If the hon. member means equal pay for equal work, fine, but members will have to suggest ways to compensate for additional expenses. Perhaps we could call it a remote area or isolated area allowance, or even an occupational hazard allowance, depending on the area.

Take a firefighter, for instance. Someone who works as a firefighter in a small community of 15,000, 17,000 or 20,000 does not run the same risks on the job as a firefighter who works in a big city like Montreal or Toronto. The risks are not the same. The buildings are higher, and exposure to chemical products may be more frequent. The working conditions are quite different.

If these differences are not reflected in the salary, it will be necessary to find a way to acknowledge them by providing an allowance. If an allowance is used, we still have the same

problem, which is how to determine the amount of the allowance.

The union has argued that it is not easy to judge to what extent one job location warrants a higher salary than another location, because the work is the same. If there is a problem with salaries, determining the allowance will also be a problem.

The hon. member for Dartmouth has remained silent about these issues. I am aware of union demands that everyone should be equal, but when they talk about making everyone equal, they mean raising the lowest salaries to the highest level in a given occupation. So that the hourly rate proposed for a plumber living in a small village of three or four thousand inhabitants where the cost of living is not particularly high is the same as a plumber working on a construction site in Montreal.

(1145)

Obviously, no plumber is going to turn his nose up at a salary increase in such a region, without its being either remote or isolated. But these have to be taken into account.

Getting back to the remote regions, a person has to pay more to get to work and, then, on top of that he has to pay more for everything he buys in order to live in this remote place, all of which comes out of his salary. A pound of butter in James Bay does not cost the same as in Montreal, because it has to be transported by air.

So, if I pay employees the same salary for their work, the one living in James Bay will not have enough salary to live on there. It does not cost the same to build a house in James Bay or to live there or in Manicouagan as it does in Montreal or Toronto. I am in favour of equalizing by taking the best salary being paid in each place in society, but we do not want to end up with other inequities that would be just as unfair.

We have to be careful in this matter before we legislate, because we also have to allow the business, the employer, to find labour, which at times can be hard to find. I myself was in education. I was an administrator in education. Most teachers from Montreal or from my riding of Joliette, a beautiful riding in the province, asked to go to teach in Port Cartier, a very remote region, would not voluntarily go and work there for equal salary. As the region of Port Cartier would not have been sufficiently self sufficient to develop its own teachers, it would have had to go without competent people to teach there.

The same thing would have happened in James Bay, Manicouagan and in other areas in other provinces. I am thinking of remote areas, in the woods, for example, areas hard to reach. Sometimes competent workers would not be hired, in order to be able to provide everyone with the public services to which they are entitled. This has been discussed with respect to certain trades but health care could have been chosen just as easily as my example of education.

Private Members' Business

When people are entitled to equal services, their wages must enable them to pay for these equal services to which they are entitled, in all fairness and independent again of their gender, age, skin colour, religion and so on. These are the sorts of things I would like to see addressed by the hon. member for Dartmouth, who seems to have a well intentioned bill here, but one that does not seem to be detailed enough to ensure it would improve the situation instead of creating other areas of inconsistency or other labour relations problems.

I would also like to see these matters discussed between employers and employees, and I think that good personnel administration means that, when disputes of this type crop up, they are discussed together, negotiated, in preference—by far—to letting the courts decide, as has been said.

I am totally in agreement with the unions on this approach when there is a problem, instead of letting grievances develop and going before the courts to have the issue decided, which takes time and runs into thousands of dollars in costs as well. What is preferable is to allow employers and employees to discuss the true nature of the problem and to look together at where solutions lie.

This motion will not be voted upon at this time, but it does show good intentions, and I hope the government will show an interest in it. I hope also, however, that the motion will be able to be translated into a bill which will do more justice to workers, to employers as well, and to the regions. Care must be taken to ensure that the regions do not end up in a situation where they will be unable to have the services necessary for a quality of life and an environment to which they are as entitled as everyone else.

I hope therefore that the hon. member for Dartmouth will seek the assistance of his colleagues in addition to his own opinions on this, and I am anxious to hear their input.

(1150)

[*English*]

Mr. Andy Scott (Fredericton—York—Sunbury, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure for me to support the motion put forward by my colleague from Dartmouth this morning. As we approach the second anniversary of the election that brought us here, I have come to appreciate the many opportunities available to members in terms of how items are put on the agenda and I realize just how talented the member for Dartmouth is in bringing these items to the attention of the nation. I bring to the attention of the House the credit he deserves on not only this one but on other issues.

Before speaking to what I believe to be the merits of the motion I will address some of the concerns that were raised by colleagues who spoke previously.

Private Members' Business

In response to the Reform member for Skeena, I think the first argument he made against the motion was on the grounds that we really had to recognize the differences in the cost of living in various places in Canada in terms of remuneration public servants receive. I challenge that on a couple of grounds. The country, the courts, and public sympathy are headed in the other direction. So even in the context of being responsive to the will of the nation, we are heading in another direction.

More appropriate to the political affiliation of the member who made the suggestion, I wonder about the cost of bureaucracy in trying to determine pay packages on the basis of regional costs of living. I believe there would have to be a new department of the cost of living. I cannot see that being consistent with decreasing the cost of governance in Canada. Quite the contrary. That would be a pretty expensive proposition and one I think the member should reconsider in the face of his own party's positions on those issues.

The second issue raised by the member for Skeena and repeated by the member for Joliette had to do with isolation pay and the need to recognize cost of living. I had the good fortune of visiting Iqaluit last fall with the social security review group, and I was shocked at the price of a banana in that community. I reassure both the member for Joliette and the member for Skeena that isolation pay and bonuses related to isolation would not be affected by the intentions of this motion. This would all be a part of job classifications and pay related to job classification and not related to isolation. Hopefully some of their concerns would be reassured by that.

The member for Skeena mentioned that he was fearful that this was the thin edge of the wedge. I agree with the member, but I think we are heading in the other direction. I would turn that metaphor on its head and say quite appropriately that we are heading to the narrow point of the triangle, not to the wide edge of the triangle, and it is just a matter of time.

It should not be surprising that I have fewer exceptions to take with the member for Broadview—Greenwood in terms of his comments, other than whether or not the nation requires national standards, the nation requires national values. Questions of fairness in remuneration speak to the need for a national value in Canada. That value is fairness, which the government has to acknowledge and respect. I say that because this discussion follows the recent debate on Bill C-64 on pay equity. It strikes me that the values behind this motion and that bill are the same. How can the government that supports the notion of pay equity based on questions of gender or minorities continue to support the notion of regional disparities in terms of how much public servants are paid depending on geography?

(1155)

The other important consideration is the inevitability of this happening anyway. I suppose this would appeal to members represented by the member for Skeena and the Reform Party in terms of the savings involved in doing this as an act of will rather than being forced to do it through the courts with all the costs associated to have these decisions forced upon us through the legal system. It is very important for us to recognize the need to do what ultimately will happen anyway without having to be told to do it.

By way of history, the previous government reacted to the strike in 1989 in Halifax and Dartmouth by enacting back to work legislation contained in Bill C-49. At that time as part of that back to work legislation a conciliation board was established that concluded that regional rate policies would not be maintained much longer. That conciliation board labelled the policy discriminatory and ordered a new collective agreement to bring east coast and west coast workers into parity.

We have already been told by a process the previous government put in place to deal with this inequity. It is long overdue that we do that. It is an important opportunity for this government to meet the commitments that were made to act in a fashion that is consistent with what we said in opposition. At that time many members said these were discriminatory practices.

As I said before, this government is promoting equity in terms of pay regardless of gender and ethnic background. It would only be fair to eliminate discrimination based on geography as well.

I will speak for a moment on the question of where this regional pay package idea came from. I do not know for certain but I assume there are a couple of historical factors that come into play here. My sense is that at the time these pay regimes were affected jobs were probably less well defined. Consequently what one did in terms of a job classification in one part of Canada was probably quite different from what one did as a part of a job classification in another part of Canada.

In the course of collective bargaining over the years job descriptions and categories have become much tighter. The level of degree that was contained in the practice and exercise of some of these jobs has probably diminished significantly. The argument that might have been in place at one time no longer exists. I also think that at the time these regional pay packages were put in place there was a lot less mobility of labour. We are obviously moving across the country today with a good deal more frequency and efficiency than we did some time ago.

The most important reason to support the motion by the member for Dartmouth is it reflects Canadian values. Many Canadians have lost their faith in this fine institution and in governance in general because they see things that they think should be fixed and which do not get fixed as quickly or as efficiently as they perhaps should. This is one of those things.

Private Members' Business

People look at this and say if you are doing the same job it seems only fair that you should be paid the same, wherever you do it in Canada. We have to respond to those common sense arguments to win back the trust and confidence of those Canadians who watch every day as we make decisions.

There was a point made that perhaps in the low wage areas a higher pay scale that would reflect the national number would have the effect of making it difficult for the local communities to compete with the public service in terms of pay packages. If 100 per cent of the employees of the public service were affected then an argument might be made for that, although I would not accept it. However, given the fact that it is only 9 per cent of the public service left, it does not strike me that they should be the people who bear the brunt of that argument.

(1200)

I encourage my colleagues to support the motion put forward by the hon. member for Dartmouth. It is important to recognize that federal government employees are competent, efficient, hard working and deserving of the same compensation regardless of where they live.

Mr. Robert D. Nault (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Labour, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in support of the motion put forward by the hon. member for Dartmouth that in the opinion of the House the government should consider abolishing regional rates of pay. It is an important issue for the hon. member and I am glad to see it being debated in the Chamber.

As hon. members may or may not be aware, regional rates of pay have been in place in the public service since the 1950s. Under this system federal public servants performing the same jobs, with the same qualifications and the same experience, are paid different wages depending on where they live. This is clearly discriminatory.

The federal government is committed to pay equity which quite simply means equal pay for work of equal value. We rightly condemn wage discrimination based on gender, race or religion. I believe discrimination based on geography is also wrong.

In the public service we have people who are working for the same employer. Yet as of September 1994 over 23,000 federal employees were being paid lower wages than others doing the same work. In some cases the discrepancy is 25 per cent. There are two people doing the same job, with the same qualifications and seniority, but one earns 25 per cent less simply because of where he or she lives.

I will give the House an example of how different that is in the public sector from what it would be in the private sector. I come from a railway background. In the railway industry there are unions. Some are conductors, some are engineers and some are

in maintenance. We negotiate a collective agreement on a year to year basis. No matter where a conductor, an engineer or a maintenance person working for CP Rail lives, they get the same pay based on a collective agreement. Quite frankly that is the way collective agreements have always been negotiated.

I do not think it takes a leap of logic or great faith to understand that we cannot go on doing this in the public sector. Over the years the number of classifications affected by regional rates of pay have been dropping steadily. We have been moving however slowly in the right direction. Now the question is when we will take the final steps to rectify a situation that should have been rectified many years ago.

Some members will be concerned about the cost of ending regional rates of pay. I agree that this is an important consideration. Treasury Board estimates the cost of removing regional rates at around \$87 million per year. This would represent a 1 per cent increase in our total outlay for public service wages. While it may be difficult to argue for such an increase while we are cutting back in everything, at some point it will not be a discretionary expenditure.

Members of the Chamber often wonder why there are regional rates of pay. The reason for them is that the argument can be made that people should be paid less based on where they live instead of being paid the same amount. Everyone seems to think we are asking for people to be paid less when we are asking for people to be paid a reasonable rate of pay at the same level as someone else living in Montreal, Toronto, Sioux Lookout or Dartmouth.

I was in the House with the hon. member for Dartmouth when east coast ships crews went on strike in 1989 over discriminatory rates of pay. I recall the hon. member seizing the issue and holding the government of the day accountable. I remember Bill C-49, the back to work legislation, that was brought forward in this case. It established a conciliation board under the Public Service Staff Relations Act.

If members look at the report issued by the board they will see that it is quite enlightening. It clearly states that regional rates of pay are discriminatory. It orders the government to eliminate regional rates of pay in that classification.

We face another such situation. Logic and precedence state that the government will be forced to act. We will be forced to do the right thing. What would it say about this institution if we waited for another conciliation board report to tell us to act when we already know we have to act.

(1205)

The member has put the issue before the House in very succinct terms. Either we do it as a collective in the House of Commons because it is the right thing to do, or we will have an outside body do it for us because it is discriminatory.

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As I mentioned before, in the private sector everybody in large unions gets the same rate of pay. In the House of Commons it could be argued that there is a bit of difference depending on where people live and their costs of living. The argument in northern Ontario is that the cost of food is higher and the cost of gas is higher. The cost of housing is much lower in Kenora—Rainy River than it is in Halifax, than it is in Toronto, than it is in Vancouver. It balances itself out in most cases.

The motion put by the member is a very good one and should be supported by the government and all members opposite to give people work and pay based on their abilities, their seniority and their classifications, not on where they live.

[Translation]

The Deputy Speaker: The time set for this debate expires at 12.10 p.m. Shall we call it 12.10 at this time?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: The time allocated for the consideration of Private Members' Business has now expired. Pursuant to Standing Order 96(1), the order is dropped from the Order Paper.

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[English]

BRITISH COLUMBIA TREATY COMMISSION ACT

The House resumed from October 20 consideration of the motion that Bill C-107, an act respecting the establishment of the British Columbia Treaty Commission, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

Mr. Werner Schmidt (Okanagan Centre, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I rise in the debate on Bill C-107 to raise a couple of objections with regard to the way the bill has been presented to the House.

What we have here is enabling legislation that sets up the British Columbia Treaty Commission. At this point as we are debating this position in the House we have a British Columbia Treaty Commission. On the commission are certain representatives of the federal government who are making statements on behalf of the federal government. Yet there is no legal authority for them to do so.

My purpose this morning is not to debate the particular details of the bill but to draw to the attention of the people of Canada—and those listening to us this morning will recognize it—that the bill is based on a recommendation of the Governor General of Canada who recommends to the House of Commons

the appropriation of public revenue under the circumstances and the manner and for the purposes set out in a measure entitled an act respecting the establishment of the British Columbia Treaty Commission. Then the summary of the bill reads:

This enactment, together with an act of the Legislature of British Columbia and a resolution of the First Nations Summit, establishes the British Columbia Treaty Commission. That commission will facilitate in British Columbia the negotiation of treaties among first nations, Canada and British Columbia.

That is a major undertaking, a very serious and a very necessary issue that needs to be dealt with. I make it abundantly clear to everyone in the House this morning that my purpose in rising to speak against the bill is not the business of negotiating land claims and treaty settlements in British Columbia. That is not my purpose.

My purpose in rising concerns the issue of people going around the country without the legitimate authority of an act passed by Parliament. We should have settled the treaty business a long time ago.

Now the British Columbia legislature has passed legislation. The summit comprised of bands and various tribes among the aboriginal peoples has established a resolution that appoints certain people legitimately. However the House has gone beyond letting people go out there and do something without the legislative authority to do so.

This process disenfranchises the representatives of the House, of the people of Canada. It is wrong in principle and I object to it. I am not alone in that objection. Sitting on either side of me this morning are representatives of the constituency to the south, Okanagan—Similkameen—Merritt, and the constituency to the north, Okanagan—Shuswap. They too find it objectionable that the House should engage in the process of doing business in this manner.

The purpose of the act so clearly stated is to establish the British Columbia Treaty Commission as undertaken in the agreement. The agreement refers to the agreement reached by the summit, the province of British Columbia and Canada.

What does it do in terms of establishing the commission? Established by the joint operation of this act, an act of the legislature of British Columbia and a resolution of the summit, is the British Columbia Treaty Commission consisting of a chief commissioner and not more than four other commissioners.

There was nothing until now. Yet they are travelling around the province of British Columbia setting up meetings. There was a meeting in my constituency last week. They are acting as if they were representing and negotiating on behalf of the Government of Canada. According to this act they could not commit the government to anything.

An hon. member: Were there discussions?

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Mr. Schmidt: Indeed there were discussions. Of course there are discussions and negotiations. What else would we expect? We need discussions to negotiate. What kind of comment was that? Is that the way the government runs things, with arrogance and presumption? That is not right.

An hon. member: Yes.

Mr. Schmidt: Yes, arrogance and presumption is exactly what it is up to.

I want to look at the purposes and powers of the commission in rather significant detail. The purpose of the commission is to facilitate in British Columbia the negotiation of treaties among one or more First Nations, Her Majesty in right of Canada and Her Majesty in right of British Columbia. The Westbank Indian band is already in step three of the process, yet the legislation has not yet been passed in the House.

Mr. Mills (Broadview—Greenwood): We are trying to be efficient.

Mr. Schmidt: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member suggests this is efficiency. Is it efficient to do things with two people who have elected representatives to represent them and make the legislative proposals that ought to exist there? If that is the argument, what is the point of electing people? What is the point of having a Parliament? What is the point of having laws if one person can decide what happens and the person happens to be the person who runs the privy council?

Apparently the commissioners are running around the province representing Canada as a result of an order in council passed by the federal cabinet. That is how they run the country. It is not a democratic process and I object very strenuously to it.

It goes beyond that. I want to go into the details and responsibilities of the commission. What is it supposed to do? It is supposed to do at least four things that I will draw to the attention of the House. It is to assess readiness in accordance with the agreement of Her Majesty in right of Canada and in right of British Columbia and one or more First Nations to begin negotiations. The commission is to assess whether or not a particular band or tribe is ready to start negotiations. That is its responsibility and it is a major responsibility. We should all have had input into that debate before the commission members went around talking to various people.

It is to allocate funds. This is the authority that gives to the treasury the right to allocate funds. However, what has happened? It says to allocate funds that have been provided. By whom? By the finance minister to enable First Nations to participate in negotiations in accordance with the criteria agreed to by the principals. Is this not an interesting provision?

We now have these people spending money, travelling around the country, being paid and incurring expenses on behalf of the Government of Canada. They are to divide moneys among the persons who are to participate in the negotiations. In accordance

with what? In accordance with criteria agreed to by the principals, which are the summit, the legislature of British Columbia and Canada.

(1215)

Finally, they are to encourage timely negotiations. Are we to suggest then that this commission is not to do the negotiations? We are getting into the details of the bill, which I said I would not do and I will not.

I will simply say that I object strenuously to this method of retroactivity, this business of presenting to the House legislation after the fact. We have asked this of the people who have briefed us on this. We have asked them if this is really retroactive legislation and if they have already begun the process. The answer was yes. I object strenuously. I hope every member will make every effort to make sure this never happens again in the House.

Hon. Raymond Chan (Secretary of State (Asia-Pacific), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure today to rise to speak on behalf of legislation that will have such great economic benefits for the people of British Columbia. With this legislation we can remove an obstacle that has hampered economic growth in B.C. for too long, uncertainty over ownership of land and resources. That uncertainty has carried a very high price.

In 1990 a Price Waterhouse study asked forestry and mining interests in B.C. about the effects of the uncertainty created by unresolved land claims. The results are sobering: \$1 billion in investments were not made in those two sectors alone; 300 new jobs were not created; 1,500 permanent jobs were adversely affected; \$125 million annually in capital investment is lost because of the lack of legal certainty with regard to land and resources. Since the time of that study the price has continued to be paid, year in and year out.

That is the toll we pay for leaving things unclear, uncertain, undefined. That is the price for refusing to sit down with our aboriginal partners and discuss rational solutions to real problems. That is the price opponents to this process will have us continue to pay. Here we have a chance to do something concrete, to create jobs and real economic growth for Canadians.

In September Ms. Marlie Beets of the B.C. Council of Forest Industries was quoted as saying her members know they cannot afford to ignore treaty issues. There is solid support in the forestry industry to resolve this, even though the industry has concerns about what treaties might contain.

People in the forestry industry of B.C. understand what is involved. They know they cannot function efficiently without clear policies. They know aboriginal rights must be defined clearly so that everyone knows the rules of the game. They know their time has come to realize the potential of their province and to expand opportunities for the people. They want to get on with it. The proposition is simple: treaties will provide certainty and

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create a better climate for investment and economic growth. This is a reality that cannot be denied.

Treaties will provide a land base for aboriginal people and with it a foundation upon which to build self-sufficient communities. This will allow aboriginal people to become involved in a range of economic activities that in the absence of a land base have been foreclosed to them. Commercial activities like mining, forestry, and tourism become far more possible to be pursued by First Nations. And the growth of strong, self-reliant, economically vibrant aboriginal communities strengthens us all, because it will bring positive economic spillover into non-aboriginal communities.

(1220)

For too long the aboriginal people of B.C. have been denied both their legal rights from the past and their hopes for the future. For too long they have suffered high rates of unemployment, low rates of literacy, and high rates of infant mortality and suicide. For too long we have denied ourselves the contribution they can make.

This situation cannot be defended and it must not continue. With rights and obligations clearly defined by treaties, all British Columbians, aboriginals and non-aboriginals, will be able to get on with realizing the potential of the province and expanding their opportunities for advancement.

This will be good news for the forest workers and the miners. It will mean an expanded tax base as the infusion of settlement funds stimulates economic activity and creates jobs. It will also mean lower social costs associated with the poverty and unemployment in aboriginal communities. It will mean the end of conflict and costly litigation and the beginning of co-operation and negotiation.

These historic issues will not go away. They cannot be wished away. As long as the issues remain unresolved, investment will stay away and the jobs that must be created will go elsewhere. The spiral will continue: uncertainty creating fewer opportunities and fewer opportunities creating more social problems. The cycle of poverty and dependence will continue.

These issues must be dealt with. We have a choice as to how we are going to do that. We can litigate at great expense to the Canadian taxpayer, knowing that at the end of this long, drawn out and often bitter process a court is likely to tell us to work out the details ourselves—something very similar to the negotiation process we have now—or we can negotiate directly from the outset.

Surely it makes good economic sense to avoid costly court battles, which cast each party in the role of antagonist. It makes good sense to instead approach these issues as partners, prepared to give and take in the spirit of trust and mutual respect.

Yes, there are real economic benefits in proceeding with treaties in B.C., but at the end of the day the most important benefit will not be felt in terms of dollars and cents; it will be felt in the lives of the individuals as they are given the opportunity to contribute further to the greatness of Canada.

The benefits of holding a job cannot always be measured by points on a graph. Having a job is really about hope. It means having the ability to plan for the future in order to realize your own potential and advance your family. It means having the pride of contributing to the overall health of one's community. Is it better to leave things in a state of confusion or to sit down with our aboriginal colleagues and establish certainty?

Perhaps it is expecting too much to hope that the Reform Party's vision of Canada is broad enough to include the first peoples, generous enough to expand the circle of opportunity, or far sighted enough to see the wisdom in finally completing this great unfinished business of our history. Surely it is not expecting too much to ask the Reform Party to take a hard headed look at the economics of treaty negotiations and admit that it makes real sense. Surely we can see the awful price we are paying for uncertainty. Surely even they can see the benefits of negotiating instead of litigating.

(1225)

I ask that the Reform Party and all other parties in the House join us in helping to close the chapter of frustration and fear and help us to write a new one of understanding and opportunity. Let us finally complete the work our forebears began.

Mr. Elijah Harper (Churchill, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am humbled to be here in the House to speak in Parliament where the laws are made. This is the supreme lawmaking body of the country, based on the principles of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, which says "based on the principles of the supremacy of God and the rule of law". We as aboriginal people, the first inhabitants of this country, have always known that.

We are now debating once again what has been debated for years and years: land. The first order of business has not been concluded with the First Nations, the first inhabitants.

The creator created all nations all over the world, created land, the trees, the environment we live in today. It so happens that he placed the aboriginal people in this country. Canada is an aboriginal word meaning community.

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Our ancestors welcomed many nations that came to this land. Today many nations benefit from the rich resources of this country. As aboriginal people, we seem to be living in a third world country in our own homeland. We have always declared that the creator put us here and the creator will always honour that, no matter what governments do, how they cut it and slice this country. The country will always be aboriginal land, Canada.

Today we are talking about the B.C. Treaty Commission. Today we are also facing another crisis dealing with Quebec, another incident that would divide Canada. If it is the will of God to honour the people he placed here, the aboriginal people, the original inhabitants of this land, then Quebec cannot separate. We have put our faith in the creator to sustain us. This institution is based on that. The Canadian Constitution is based on that. As a matter of fact it is written on a piece of paper I have that in the principles of Christianity is found the liberty that has made Canada great. It is so great that in the United Nations' annual listing of the world's countries for 1994 Canada was ranked first out of 173.

(1230)

Canada has benefited from the relationship with the aboriginal people. When we make treaties it has to be understood by every Canadian that we are here to co-exist, to welcome the Europeans, to live side by side with each other, to respect and honour each other and not to dominate. These treaties must also have the view and philosophy of the First Nations in this country because the creator put us here. We could not have given the land to anyone because we do not own it. We could only share the land and resources that would benefit everybody else in this country.

We did not accept the European concept of land tenure which is to have property, to see it as a commodity and to exploit and develop it for the purposes of a company or one or a few individuals. Maybe that is why opposition members are afraid of the land claims we are making. Maybe they think we may become like them. We may acquire all these things and not share them. In assessing these things we tend to assess the successes of our land claims and businesses in our communities based on European values and not in relation to some of the traditional ancient values we used to have. However, they are coming back again today.

We have to get back to the ancient roots because we are very close to the creator. The land has caused so much hurt. Look at the Oka crisis. Corporal Lemay died in that situation because the Mohawks did not want their ancestral burial grounds decimated. This summer in Ipperwash, Anthony "Dudley" George was killed as a result of land, another aboriginal burial ground.

These issues have to be resolved. They have to be dealt with. Our way of thinking and our philosophy are ones that have always been shared with other First Nations in this country, to

share what we have, to share the land and resources. If we were to add up what it means in dollars and cents over the last 500 years I do not think it would even represent 1 per cent of the compensation to the aboriginal peoples. We probably would have been the wealthiest people in the world if we had been greedy and kept everything for ourselves. However, that was not our way of thinking.

That is why I am so honoured and humbled to be here, to be in this House which was created on the principles I espoused and which this place has sanctified to say all these things. All of us have to be reminded daily because we make mistakes as human beings. Personally, it has been a difficult journey for me to be involved in mainstream politics, provincially, nationally and internationally, in promoting this kind of philosophy.

(1235)

The world's needs have come together because there is a global economy, a global movement which is happening, which is tearing our communities apart. It is influencing the communities in Canada. It is not just the aboriginal people, but Canadians as well. They feel helpless. They distrust governments. We have to restore trust.

I support Bill C-107. It will begin the treaty making process in British Columbia where treaties have not been made in the past, except for northeastern B.C., in the Peace River area, where Treaty No. 8 was signed years ago, as well as the treaty concerning Vancouver Island. However, most of British Columbia has never been in the treaty making process where land has been settled.

Our rights have never been extinguished. The Canadian Constitution has recognized that. There is not a requirement under the Constitution for any citizen or any nation to give up rights; rather, those rights which are recognized and affirmed in the Canadian Constitution should be expanded and defined. People are concerned about extinguishing land claims. They feel there should no longer be a requirement to extinguish land claims.

Several reports have been made to government over the past years. One was the 1985 Coolican report entitled: "Living Treaties, Lasting Agreements" which determined that extinguishing land claims were no longer an option. Today there is another report entitled: "Canada and Aboriginal Peoples: A New Partnership" authored by A.C. Hamilton. That report will be discussed in the near future. There was also the interim report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples entitled: "Treaty Making in the Spirit of Co-existence: An Alternative to Extinguishment". That report is also an alternative to extinguishing land claims.

All of those reports suggest a new approach. All of them ask that we come together, that we respect each other and that we negotiate in good faith. The rights of all individuals must be recognized. Whether they be aboriginal, government, business,

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or third party interests, their rights must be protected in order for us to co-exist without fear.

I have heard some hon. members say that one law should be applied. Whose law should be applied? When our cemeteries are being desecrated, will the government remove the people who are occupying them? How would they feel if our aboriginal people were to go to their cemeteries? Whose law would be applied?

We must bring this to the attention of the Canadian public. Our concept of land tenure is one of sharing the land and resources. If the Canadian people understood that, they would not be threatened by land claims. Their interests would be protected. Aboriginal rights would ensure that. Our forefathers have taught us for many years that our history is very rich.

I have called for a sacred assembly to which all members will be invited. I have invited the Prime Minister and the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. A letter will also be sent to opposition members inviting them to participate in the sacred assembly which will be held hopefully sometime in December.

The sacred assembly is designed to bring together aboriginal and non-aboriginal leaders, spiritual leaders and religious leaders from all walks of life in Ottawa for the purpose of providing counsel and promoting reconciliation because of the events of this past summer.

(1240)

What I believe has been missing is the spiritual element of this whole process. The political process has failed us. We need to get back to our traditional spiritual roots. The prime objective is to restore that so that the spiritual leaders, advisers and elders can provide direction not only to our aboriginal leaders but to government leaders across this country as well. This is sorely needed and the time is right for us to address these things.

With those few words, I thank you for listening. I recommend this bill to the members opposite.

Mr. Gordon Kirkby (Prince Albert—Churchill River, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today I rise to address the House on Bill C-107, the British Columbia Treaty Commission Act. I am extremely pleased to be joining my hon. colleagues in speaking in support of this legislation. It is imperative that we give the treaty commission the legal foundation and powers it needs to get on with the job of settling the dozens of land claims that are casting a cloud of uncertainty over British Columbia.

Settlement agreements acknowledge that claimant groups have some historic interest in the land which was occupied and used by their ancestors long before Europeans moved into the claim area. Equally as important, land claims settlements pave

the way for a better economic future for the beneficiaries. They do so by providing a financial package to the claimant group and by ensuring a secure land base and certainty over resource ownership, all of which are critical to establishing a viable economic base.

The settlement of a land claim is not an end in itself, but a beginning. It is the beginning of a new era in which aboriginal people can regain control over their destiny, a destiny which has been taken from them. They can gain control of their economic future and reduce their dependence on government.

Hon. members have heard aboriginal leaders say time and again that self-government will be meaningless without sustainable economic development that is controlled by the aboriginal people themselves. On the other hand, the expansion of the aboriginal economy can help counteract the human and economic costs that for so many years and for so many generations have paralyzed First Nations communities across this great nation.

Economic development is critical to achieving the red book goal of strengthening aboriginal communities. Self-government, improved social services, better health care, more sensitive justice initiatives: the success of all of these efforts depends in part on strengthened local economies that provide aboriginal people with meaningful employment and reasonable levels of income.

There are many examples of the positive impact land claims settlements have had on aboriginal economies and standards of living. The Inuit of the Nunavik region are a case in point. Under the terms of the James Bay and Northern Quebec agreement, the Inuit established the Makivik Corporation which among other things serves as a holding company for a wide range of businesses that are bringing tangible economic benefits to northern Quebec every day.

I quote from the Makivik Corporation's 1994-95 annual report in which third vice-president Mark Gordon, who is responsible for the economic development program, made the following statement: "There is a common theme that unites all of our initiatives. That theme can be summarized by one word: control". Control by the Inuit people of their own future, control to do good, to enhance the lives of Inuit people.

(1245)

The Inuit of Nunavik have certainly taken control of their economic future. The Makivik Corporation has used compensation funds to invest in a wide range of successful businesses that are providing employment and income to Inuit beneficiaries.

Air Inuit and First Air, for example, provide critical transportation and delivery services both within Nunavik and between the north and other parts of Canada and Greenland. Both airlines are major employers in the Nunavik region and both reported profitable years in 1994.

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Makivik Corporation also owns the Kigaq Travel Agency which promotes travel in northern Quebec. Another Makivik subsidiary, Seaku Fisheries, is involved in commercial fisheries development. Among other things, Seaku manages Makivik's shrimp licence. In 1994, 43 Inuit fishermen from Nunavik were employed on shrimp fishing vessels with collective earnings of close to \$700,000. The company also invested about \$500,000 in 1994 in community based fishing projects.

Seaku owns 50 per cent of Unaaq Fisheries which trains fishermen and pursues fisheries business opportunities at the international level. In 1994, Unaaq International completed consulting contracts for the National Capital Commission, the United Nations Development Program, the Canadian International Development Agency and Industry Canada.

A newly created subsidiary of Makivik, Nunavik Arctic Foods, is commercializing Nunavik country foods, particularly caribou and ring seal meat. The food is harvested through traditional Inuit hunts, processed and packaged in four community processing centres and distributed throughout retail outlets throughout Nunavik. Studies have shown that during full scale operations of processing centres, 72 cents out of every dollar will remain in Nunavik.

Makivik has also entered into a joint venture with other Inuit development corporations to form a Panarctic Inuit logistics corporation. This new enterprise recently joined with Frontec Logistics Corporation to successfully bid on a \$288 million contract to operate and maintain the north warning system for a five-year period ending in the year 2000. Among other things, the agreement between the two corporations provides for the recruitment, training and hiring of Inuit workers.

The Cree of James Bay region have also used their compensation dollars and other economic development funding to acquire and establish a very impressive portfolio of collectively owned businesses among other interests. The Cree holding company known as Creeco owns an airline and a construction company.

Using funds from their 1984 land claim settlement, the Inuvialuit of the western Arctic region have pursued a wide range of economic development initiatives under the umbrella of the Inuvialuit Development Corporation.

The most successful has been the Inuvialuit Petroleum Corporation which in 1994 realized an amazing 200 per cent return on the timely sale of most of its holdings in western Canada. The corporation closed the year with a \$50 million investment portfolio and total assets of \$117 million. The company has initiated a number of programs to provide direct benefits to Inuvialuit people, including employment training and development. It has an exciting future in the Canadian petroleum industry.

The Inuvialuit also co-own the Northern Transportation Company with another aboriginal business, the Nunasai Corporation of Nunavik. In 1994 the Northern Transportation Company was named business of the year by the Northwest Territories Chamber of Commerce. Over the 10 years that the business has been owned by aboriginal people, it has contributed more than \$100 million in taxes, purchases and payrolls to the territorial economy.

Another successful Inuvialuit venture is the Umayst Corporation which markets musk-ox meat and wool. The Inuvialuit Regional Corporation has also formed an international investment house that caters specifically to native groups around the world. Based on its track record, in 1993 the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation was able to secure an \$87 million loan from the Bank of Montreal, part of which was used to repay a loan from the federal government. Clearly Canada's investment and land claim settlements is a sound one.

(1250)

Settlement agreements often include specific provisions for economic development that go beyond land and resource ownership and financial compensation. For example, as a result of the Nunavut final agreement, the Inuit of Canada's eastern Arctic have been guaranteed preferred access to economic opportunities in the area of guiding, sports lodges and the commercial marketing of wildlife products. The final agreement also provides for increased Inuit participation in government employment and contracting within the settlement area and includes the right to negotiate employment, training and other benefits for the developers of major projects.

Similarly, the land claim settlements of the Gwich'in and Sahtu Dene and Metis recognize the need to expand the economic horizons for aboriginal people. The Sahtu agreement provides for economic development opportunities related to guiding, lodges, naturalist activities and commercial fishing. The Sahtu Dene and Metis will also be well positioned to take advantage of employment and business opportunities that will arise in the oil and gas sector as a result of the settlement agreement.

The Council for Yukon Indians' final agreement also enhances opportunities for Indian people to participate in the territorial economy. Both the federal and territorial governments have made commitments to contract with aboriginal companies to provide Yukon Indians with access to government employment.

The combination of land claim settlement agreements and other economic development initiatives have resulted in significant expansion and strengthening of the aboriginal economy in recent years. Twenty years ago a survey of aboriginal economic development in most regions of Canada would have revealed pockets of commercial activity heavily concentrated in natural resource based industries. Today there are literally thousands of

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aboriginal businesses across Canada operating in all sectors of the economy.

In my province of Saskatchewan, for instance, there are over 700 aboriginal owned and operated businesses enjoying tremendous economic success, doing well in the economy of Saskatchewan and indeed all of Canada. They provide employment to aboriginal and non-aboriginal people, paying the government tax revenue and all of the good things that go with sustained economic growth.

These aboriginal enterprises include industry firms, transportation and construction companies, retail and service outlets, manufacturing operations, management consultants, computer companies, arts and crafts enterprises, tourist outfitters and recreation oriented businesses.

Aboriginal businesses are also taking advantage of opportunities in new markets, such as authentic aboriginal tourism products which involve a combination of facilities and experiences that are uniquely aboriginal, experiences which are sought by many people from many nations.

Market research by the government indicates that authentic aboriginal tourism products have the potential to generate revenues of \$1.6 billion annually in the Canadian economy. Not only will this benefit the aboriginal business but all businesses and enterprises across this nation.

Aboriginal business development is gathering momentum as First Nations, Inuit and Metis peoples seek to gain control of their economic destinies. In a 1991 survey of aboriginal people, more than 18,000 respondents indicated that they own or operate a business and 34,000 others indicated their intention to start a business within two years.

Aboriginal people are proving to be astute business people. An independent study of 292 aboriginal firms that received financial assistance from Industry Canada revealed that 90 per cent of those firms were operating after two years. These businesses have proven to be good sources of employment for aboriginal and non-aboriginal Canadians alike. Of the 2,122 jobs created or maintained with support from Industry Canada, 1,486 were held by aboriginal people and 636 by non-aboriginal people.

(1255)

In addition to the business ventures I mentioned earlier, which are a direct result of land claims, there are many other examples of successful aboriginal entrepreneurship.

In Saskatchewan the Meadow Lake Tribal Council, which represents nine First Nations, was the winner of the 1995 prestigious Aboriginal Economic Developer of the Year Award. The tribal council has developed an impressive economic devel-

opment strategy that sets out a tremendous range of activities. Already a forestry company owned by the tribal council has generated 240 direct jobs.

In La Ronge, Saskatchewan, Kitsaki Development Corporation has business enterprises which gross over \$30 million a year and provide well in excess of 250 full time jobs for aboriginal and non-aboriginal people alike.

In The Pas, Manitoba the Opaskwayak Cree Nation owns seven profitable businesses and is developing more. The latest venture is an \$8 million, 70,000 square foot hotel complex that will open in 1996. Another organization of Manitoba First Nations, the Southeast Resource Development Council recently opened a plant that will manufacture windows and doors for the nine First Nations in southeastern Alberta.

Next year the first aboriginal owned hydroelectric plant in Canada will open in the Northwest Territories. The \$26 million Cascades station will be owned by the Dogrib Power Corporation and most of the 100 jobs created by the plant will go to local Dogrib people.

In Quebec the Mohawk Trading Company in Kanasatake markets office supplies, equipment, computers, software and furniture to a wide range of clients including federal departments, corporations like Pepsi-Cola and Colgate-Palmolive.

On the east coast the Labrador Inuit Development Corporation has signed a multi-million dollar contract to mine and export rare anorthosite crystal to Italy.

We are witnessing an increase in the entrepreneurial partnerships between aboriginal people and mainstream business communities. Such partnerships, joint ventures and strategic business alliances are essential if the aboriginal community is to capitalize on opportunities throughout the economy.

In northern Ontario, for example, the Mussel White Mine Development project involves an agreement between Placer Dome Mining and four First Nations. Under this agreement 60 jobs will be created at the mine site. The Long Lake First Nation in northern Ontario has also negotiated an agreement that provides for employment, job training and opportunities with Long Lac Forest Products: Buchanan Brothers. This agreement has resulted in 65 jobs for First Nations people.

Despite the impediment of unresolved land claims, British Columbia First Nations are also pursuing business opportunities. Since June 1995, for example, the Skeetchestn First Nation and the Chai-Na-Ta Corporation have been working together to grow ginseng on 544 acres of reserve land in the Kamloops area for export to China and Hong Kong. In return for providing financing and land for the project, the First Nation anticipates approximately 300 jobs and more than \$14 million in profits over the 10-year agreement.

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On Vancouver Island the Nuu-cha-nulth Tribal Council has turned a former residential school into a resort. The 56-room lodge is being operated as a franchise of the Best Western chain. About 70 per cent of its workforce is First Nations people.

Most of my comments today have illustrated how land claims can contribute to the development of aboriginal economies. But resolution of land claims is also vital to non-aboriginal peoples since it creates a climate of certainty and often leads to economic spin-offs in neighbouring non-aboriginal communities, as well as many jobs for non-aboriginal people.

Strengthening aboriginal communities provides new opportunities and wealth creation possibilities for all Canadians. It has been estimated that if aboriginal people were to achieve the employment and wage parity with other Canadians by the year 2000 it would boost our gross domestic product by a whopping 2.3 per cent. A stronger First Nations community means stronger regional economies and a stronger country.

(1300)

Hon. members can rest assured the government will continue to support business and economic development initiatives among aboriginal people. We will do so not simply for the economic benefits but as a litmus test of our beliefs in fairness, justice, and equality of opportunity, as we stated in the red book.

Over the years we have not paid the attention we ought to allowing aboriginal people to fully participate in the Canadian economy. We have not paid attention to the great opportunities we can experience by everybody working together. When we treat all people in this land with dignity and with respect, when we work together, when we do not see the colour of a person's skin, when we do not see the race of a person, when we do not make distinctions based on religion, when we reach across that gulf that has been created to share and to work together, it is then that our nation can prosper.

These are times when we hear many intolerant statements, many hurtful statements. However, these are times when we must be all the more vigilant in our fight for equality and dignity for all people.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you for this opportunity to point out the economic gains that could be made for all people by settling some long-unfinished business.

Mr. Jack Iyerak Anawak (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Lib.):

[Editor's Note: Member spoke in Inuktitut.]

[English]

Mr. Speaker, it is always a pleasure to hear people from all walks of life supporting land claims. I consider this a misnomer,

but it is called land claims today. As far as we are concerned, we are not claiming the land; the land is already ours. For lack of a better word, we call it land claims.

There was some question about what the legal basis is for the B.C. Treaty Commission. The B.C. Treaty Commission is presently acting as an agent within the authority of the three parties, which are of course the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, the provincial government, and the aboriginal people. In order to obtain funding for negotiations, the government had to seek the necessary appropriations from Parliament, which it has done. To allay the fears that there is no legal basis for the commission, we can rest assured the commission does have a legal basis.

I will return to the land claims issue in British Columbia and some of the issues the hon. member was talking about. One thing we have managed to achieve in a very short space of time as aboriginal people is to establish that we are a force to be reckoned with. People with little tolerance for aboriginal issues have a problem with the existence of land claims.

(1305)

It was not so long ago that a previous prime minister of our party questioned that very thing but quickly turned around and realized that we do have a basis for land claims. The Right Hon. Pierre Elliott Trudeau questioned that in the early 1960s but realized that we did have a basis for recognition of aboriginal rights. Since then it has been acknowledged that there is indeed a basis for the negotiation of land claims.

In the past, aboriginal people have always been at a disadvantage in that it seemed we did not have anything to negotiate with, whereas the government had everything at its disposal to negotiate with. Too late for a lot of us, we realized we had a lot more to negotiate with than we thought. There was no clear definition of who owned the land and held the title. As a result, a recognition of the fact that we were here precipitated the land claims negotiations in the 1970s. Today we have settled quite a number of those negotiations and are continuing to settle them.

Now we are just starting on British Columbia, which is only right. It is long overdue for justice. I must question whether justice will ever really be served at this late date to the aboriginal peoples of British Columbia because of other interests and the agreement beforehand of not dealing with privately owned lands. I have to wonder about all this.

I was wondering if the hon. member could elaborate a little more on what his role was as the former chair of the aboriginal affairs committee. How did he see the positive benefits of land claims to the aboriginal peoples across the land, more so maybe in the province of Saskatchewan?

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I was in a conference this morning in which aboriginal forestry was discussed. My knowledge of forestry is somewhat limited. I have very little knowledge of trees. Ask me about snow and how to define snow in 25 different ways and I can do that, but forestry is not my area of expertise. It looked like a very good program that was going on where they wanted to have joint ventures and co-management.

I was just wondering if the member might elaborate a little more on what co-management or joint venture in Saskatchewan is and whether it is in his area of expertise as a result of his chairmanship of the aboriginal affairs committee.

Mr. Kirkby: Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. parliamentary secretary for the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development for his question.

In my experience, we are just seeing for the first time the effects of land entitlement settlements upon the people of Saskatchewan. This is a result of longstanding grievances between First Nations and the government. Approximately 26 First Nations signed land entitlement projects, which compensated them for land that was not allocated to them at the time of the signing of the treaty but which should have been.

(1310)

I believe it is a very positive development in Saskatchewan. I believe there will be a lot of economic development projects. These economic development projects will benefit both the aboriginal and non-aboriginal communities.

Within Saskatchewan we have to learn to better live together and work together. As in other places, we see that there can be intolerant attitudes expressed from time to time. However, in Saskatchewan nobody is going away. The aboriginal people will be there in the future and the non-aboriginal people will be there in the future. We must learn to get along and work together.

When people begin to see the benefits of the land claims settlements to the economy in general there will be an acceptance of the process. We will learn that what benefits one group in Saskatchewan will benefit all. When one group succeeds we all succeed.

In the area of resource management, we need to see that all people will begin to respect one another and will be able to sit down at the table to learn to work together and respect each other. We must not say things that can inflame the situation. We must work together so that all people will live together with mutual respect and dignity, now and in the years to come.

We must learn to live together and work together. The land claims settlements, as well as a number of other initiatives, will give us the opportunity to do so. We need to ensure that all people will strive for peace and will work together in mutual respect.

Mr. John Loney (Edmonton North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased and honoured to be able to stand in the House today to speak on the British Columbia Treaty Commission and its second annual report.

The report, released June 27, 1995, and tabled in the House on October 19 by the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, cites the participation of the majority of First Nations in British Columbia and the progress being made at several negotiating tables as evidence that this voluntary treaty making process is working. In the four months since the report was released, significant progress has been made in the negotiation of treaties in British Columbia.

When the report was released, 43 First Nations, representing approximately 65 per cent of the First Nations population in British Columbia, had entered the six-stage treaty process. By October 20, 1995, the number of First Nations participating in the process had increased to 47, representing over 70 per cent of the First Nations population.

In June seven First Nations had progressed to stage three framework agreement negotiations. Framework agreements have now been signed by the first four nations: the Champagne Aishihik, the Gitksan, the Wet'suwet'en, and the Sechelt. These First Nations are involved in stage four of the process, the negotiation of an agreement in principle.

Framework agreements have been initialled with three other First Nations: the Teslin and Tlingit Council, Gitanyow Hereditary Chiefs, and the Ditidaht First Nation.

Stage three framework negotiations are in progress with four First Nations: the Kaska Dene Council, the Lheit Lit'en First Nation, the Squamish First Nation, and the Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council.

(1315)

The British Columbia treaty commissioners have made several recommendations relative to the challenges being faced in the process. They recommended that the principals and the parties to the negotiations continue to commit extraordinary effort to public information and that principals take a greater role in public education on a province-wide, regional and local basis.

The commission notes that in its first annual report it was critical of the principals for not fulfilling their obligation to inform the public. It adds that since then substantial progress has been made in the area of public information. The principals have made considerable effort to inform the public about the process and the issues, all in a spirit of openness.

Another of the commission's recommendations centres on the necessity of both levels of government to make full use of their consultation processes so that the community at large will be confident that its voices are heard and its concerns are considered.

The province-wide treaty negotiations advisory committee meets on a regular basis to provide advice to both the federal and provincial governments on sectorial issues such as fisheries, energy, petroleum and mineral resources; lands and forests; wildlife and governance. Regional advisory committees are being organized at the local or regional level in areas where First Nations are entering the treaty process. The government is committed to a consultation process that works effectively. Such a process is critical to the success of the treaty making process.

In this year's report the commissioners also recommend that an interim measures agreement be negotiated in a meaningful and timely manner so that the treaty negotiation process is not undermined. Interim measures are of critical importance to First Nations and should be included as a necessary element in a co-ordinated treaty making process. Interim measures should provide First Nations with adequate protection of their affected interests until a treaty is in place, thus avoiding the necessity of litigation.

The federal government is prepared to consider requests for interim measures where the issues are critical to concluding the treaties. The commissioners recommended that the principals review the current funding program to ensure that First Nations have adequate funds to prepare for and carry out negotiations and to enable the commission to carry out its responsibilities in allocating funds in a fair, independent and effective manner. The issue of funding is under review by the principals.

The commissioners also recommended that the principals address ways to effectively manage a treaty making process where more than 43 First Nations will be involved in negotiations. This issue has become even more critical to the principals as there are now 47 First Nations involved in the process. The principals are involved in discussions with each other and with the commission to find creative ways to manage these complex negotiations while respecting the right of all 196 First Nations in British Columbia to participate in this historic treaty making process.

I am pleased to report that the implementation of the commissioners' sixth and final recommendation is nearing completion with the introduction of Bill C-107, the British Columbia Treaty Commission Act, in the House on Wednesday, October 18, 1995. The enactment of the bill, together with the resolution of the First Nations Summit and the provincial Treaty Commission Act, will formally establish the British Columbia Treaty Commission as a legal entity.

Chief Commissioner Alec Robertson, Q.C., and Commissioners Barbara Owl Fisher, Will Battam and Peter Eluzsik continue the work begun by their predecessors in fulfilling the commission's role as the keeper of the process. Miles Richardson was recently nominated by the First Nations Summit to replace Carol T. Corcoran, one of the original commissioners. These individu-

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als are to be thanked for their dedication and perseverance during these trying times. This is a new process and they have worked long and hard to ensure that the process will work.

(1320)

During the first year of operation the commission's emphasis was on accepting First Nations into the process. As the parties move into framework and agreement in principle negotiations, the commission's role will be focused on monitoring and facilitating progress.

The commission and the government are committed to the treaty making process and to doing everything possible to ensure that it carries the people of the province of British Columbia into the next century with healthier communities and more productive relationships.

Mr. Jack Iyerak Anawak (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Lib.):

[Editor's Note: Member spoke in Inuktitut.]

[English]

As I said earlier, it is always a pleasure to listen to people who have some understanding but also support the aboriginal people.

In the long run land claims is a misnomer. I guess the whole issue evolved because of the fact that all of a sudden more people were here than had been previously, since 1492. Prior to that we had been a stable population.

Christopher Columbus came over in 1492, which reminds me of a joke that should not be taken seriously. Dick Gregory, a comedian born in 1932, said: "You have to say this for the white race. Its self-confidence knows no bounds. Who else could go to a small island in the south Pacific where there is no poverty, no crime, no unemployment, no war and no worry and call it a primitive society?" Basically the same thing happened here when Christopher Columbus arrived.

However the reality is that this is 1995. We have gone through a lot of changes over the years. Now I think we are finally getting the recognition that should have been there right from the beginning.

I have a question for the hon. member on the British Columbia Treaty Commission. What will the B.C. treaty commission do to ensure that all British Columbians are informed of the treaty negotiation process?

Mr. Loney: Mr. Speaker, in reply to the hon. member's question, as part of its duties the British Columbia Treaty Commission is responsible for the provision of a public record on negotiations. The commission is required to report annually to the legislature, Parliament and the First Nations Summit on the progress of the negotiations.

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Recently the commission released its second annual report to the principals detailing the progress of the negotiations. I have encouraged the new commissioners to play a larger role in informing the public on treaty negotiation issues.

In addition, a number of other steps have been taken to ensure that the treaty negotiation process is accessible and open to all British Columbians. These steps would include establishment of regionally based advisory committees, public forums, regional information meetings, a toll free phone number and brochures.

Mr. Stan Dromisky (Thunder Bay—Atikokan, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in the last few years the public information programs developed around the treaty negotiation process have expanded from public forums and open houses to include a wide range of different activities covering the province. It is a fantastic positive model, one that reaches into every home, every community, every institution within each and every one of the communities in question.

(1325)

I commend the government for introducing a model of that nature. All parties to treaty negotiations in British Columbia place a high priority on effective public information. That is the key to success.

Without information we operate in darkness, in ignorance. Decisions are made without the proper facts, without the proper support systems, without the proper introduction of the major parties concerned in helping to bring about the most effective decision that will cater to the needs of all parties concerned.

There are many opportunities for the public to learn about treaty negotiations and the treaty making process. These opportunities are being provided through activities undertaken provincially, regionally and locally. To date this government and the other governments involved are doing a fantastic job in notifying all parties concerned of the process and where, when and why activities must take place.

At the provincial level the tripartite public education committee or TPEC takes the lead. The committee consists of members representing the three principals who are representatives of the Canadian government, representatives of the province of British Columbia and the First Nations Summit.

For clarification purposes I would like to read from the act what we mean by the summit:

Summit means the body that is established to represent the First Nations in British Columbia that agree to participate in the process provided for in the agreement to facilitate the negotiations of treaties among First Nations, Her Majesty in right of Canada and Her Majesty in right of British Columbia.

At the provincial level TPEC's primary objective is to plan, organize and implement province-wide public education programs on treaty negotiations.

I digress. Later in my presentation I will discuss the value of the process introduced in the province of British Columbia.

At the outset of the treaty negotiation process in 1994 the strategy developed by TPEC focused on holding public forums in communities around the province. Between June 1994 and today a total of fourteen forums have been held in British Columbia; five on Vancouver Island in Port Hardy, Nanaimo, Campbell River, Port Alberni and Victoria; three in the north in Prince Rupert, Smithers and Prince George; one in Cariboo—Chilcotin in Williams Lake; one in the Kootenays in Cranbrook; one in the interior in Kelowna; one on the sunshine coast in Powell River; and two in the lower mainland in Chilliwack and Vancouver. Two more forums will be held within the next few weeks in the lower mainland, one in Richmond and one in Delta.

The fact that so many have already taken place shows that the model is a dynamic one. We are reaching the people we should be reaching.

These community events begin with an informal open house in which the public is able to view displays and videos, pick up information and speak one on one with negotiators. The open house is followed by a forum, a formal panel discussion involving not only the principles of negotiation but also the B.C. Treaty Commission and the local first nation. After the presentations the floor is open to questions from the audience. The forums are moderated by a high profile member of the community. This is a dynamic community interacting model.

(1330)

The critical and most crucial facets are where the individual who has a concern can come to the public meeting, identify with one of the leaders or one of the representatives of TPEC and discuss on a personal basis problems, issues or concerns relating to problem that will be discussed in the general meeting.

Then follows information. The information giving process is critical. It is absolutely essential that information at this stage be given in a very objective manner; clean, precise, not nebulous, not sweeping generalizations. The facts must be given as we know them in the real world.

Because three parties are involved in this process and because community representatives and community leaders are there from all facets of the community, the chances of success of giving a very accurate, true picture of whatever the scenario might be is far greater than having a bureaucrat come in from Ottawa or from Victoria to make a presentation on behalf of the governments in question or even a First Nations representative

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making a presentation on behalf of all First Nations people in British Columbia.

We know from research that if all parties do not get involved in the decision making and searching for information processes, the picture will be tainted, tainted because a person at the top, if he has the responsibility for giving the information, has a very slim chance of presenting a real picture of what is happening at the grassroots.

Let me give an idea of what I am talking about here using a board of education as an example. It could be any institution we have created in the country. The chief executive officer will have a chain of command. The information will be coming from the grassroots up this chain to the office of the chief executive officer. The chief executive officer is paid a very grand salary and is responsible for all operations within his institution which might encompass thousands of people. He is responsible for their behaviour and actions and the outcome. Do you think for one moment that chief executive officer will be presented a true, accurate picture of what is happening at the grassroots? Of course not.

All research reveals that as information flows upward to the pinnacle, to the top of the pyramid, it slowly but surely takes on a new meaning, a new perspective, a new perception. Whatever the motivation might be, whatever the reasons might be, the information reaching the top is not the truth. This is one of the major reasons why this model introduced by the government of British Columbia has all the partners and all of the participants partaking in a variety of ways with a multitude of strategies. They are contributing at the grassroots and affecting the people who are making the decisions at the top end as well as middle management. This model is dynamic. It is one of the most fruitful models we have at the present time in our democratic society.

These community events begin with an informal open house. This is crucial. People must come into an atmosphere and environment where they feel at ease. It has to feel as if they are coming into a family reunion where they can openly and honestly discuss their concerns and perceptions with each other. It must not have the atmosphere of a formal meeting dictated and controlled by one chairperson.

After the presentation, the floor is open to questions from the audience. That is another crucial stage of this process. The people that are asking the questions may not have the same perception as a chairperson or any other of the major players has in this session. The person asking the question may have a completely different background which in turn affects how he or she perceives what is being presented in this meeting. If this person's perception is off balance or it is not in harmony with the

perceptions and actual concepts that are being presented by the leaders of these groups then I think we have a problem.

(1335)

However, in this model the people who are responding to the concerns and to the questions must have the background to understand the people who are asking the questions. It is absolutely essential that in this model we have representatives of the First Nations people who have a very in depth, comprehensive understanding of what this treaty and this model are all about and what the process is all about.

I would rather see someone from the First Nations who is capable of handling that role presenting an information package or responses to questions raised by First Nations people than someone coming from the department of Indian affairs in Ottawa telling the people in British Columbia that this is the way it is and these are the answers to the questions.

My perception will never be the same, no matter how long I work with First Nations people. I could work with them for years and I would never have the same type of perception of any situation as they have simply because I have not been raised in that culture. I have not been raised in their environment. Therefore, their experiences would be far different from mine.

The forums are moderated by a high profile member of the community. As more First Nations groups move into stages three and four of the treaty process, TPEC is expanding its activities to include issue oriented forums, with more focus on what is happening at the negotiating table and workshops for the media. The first media workshop was held in Nanaimo last week and was extremely well received.

A second level of public information activity takes place at the regional and local level. As part of the readiness preparations, the three negotiating parties establish a tripartite public information working group to support the negotiations. This is critical. We may have some of the most dynamic, shattering, exciting, zestful kind of experiences within that public forum but if the information that is being shared and generated is not shared with other people in the community who could not be in that public hall, all is in vain. All we are doing is helping to develop a gap between those who know and those who do not know.

Therefore, it becomes much more difficult to convince the public who do not have the first hand knowledge to really and truly comprehend what is going on. If they are making judgments based on ignorance then we have trouble. We then have negative reactions to anything that is being proposed in the media.

It is critical how the information is handled, the media that is involved, their perceptions and the kind of interpretations they give.

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This working group develops a strategy, an action plan for the negotiation and takes responsibility for implementing the plan in the communities which fall within the traditional territories. It is extremely important to realize that these people must have an awareness of the communities in question. The model they might introduce to a community like Nanaimo may not be exactly the same as the one they might introduce in a community like Powell River. They must have a knowledge and understanding of the people involved in each of the communities. What are the concerns in that community? What are the things people are saying in coffee shops? What are they saying on the reserves?

(1340)

What kind of reaction are we getting to things we have already done? What kind of feedback are we getting from the major players from what we have done in the past? All of this has to be taken into consideration in making a global perception of the community where we are going to present this information package, or become involved in a process with the three partners and other members of the community.

A variety of initiatives have been implemented throughout the province. Some examples of programs include resource centres being established for the community at large on the sunshine coast, in Kelowna and in the Cariboo—Chilcotin area. These will be located in the local libraries.

The libraries will be provided with a set of three binders. One contains all information pertaining to the treaty negotiation process. I have not seen the binder, but I am hoping that the instructions regarding process are clean, clear, concise and understandable. The second contains all information specific to the negotiations being carried out in that community. The third contains all documentation pertaining to the local consultation process.

Newspaper supplements are being produced in Kelowna, Prince George and Williams Lake. These will be inserted into local newspapers to provide the widest distribution of information about the negotiations to the community. Extra copies will be produced for use as handout material at public events.

Open houses are held from time to time in each negotiation area to allow the public to informally meet with negotiators to discuss matters relating to the negotiations. This is dynamic because there is no set formula or schedule, but when the need arises within a community for an open house it materializes.

This is extremely important because when the emotions rise, you must strike when the iron is hot. If the people are really agitated and very concerned about some issue, they should have an open house as quickly as possible if that is a strategy that they feel is going to be the most effective in giving the information to all parties concerned.

A local organized public forum has been held in Prince Rupert. These forums involve not only negotiators, but also members of the community to discuss issues in depth. The forums are normally taped by the local community cable television stations and rebroadcast. We are very fortunate that often the local community television stations will rebroadcast some of these events two, three or four times at different times of the day to make sure they hit the various listening audiences that are available at that time.

Information about negotiations is often made available through other public events. For example, in the north, information booths have been set up at annual trade shows, giving negotiators wide exposure to those attending the show. Another example was the information booth set up for the Burrard negotiations at weekend canoe races and at a shopping mall as part of a week long native heritage days event.

Those are some examples, but I could go on and on because the human mind is a very creative thing. If you take the tethers off the human mind and allow it to be free to create, you will find that the individuals concerned will come up with a multitude of strategies on how to share information with each and every concerned person.

The working groups are also actively seeking opportunities for negotiators to speak to community groups, such as chambers of commerce, municipal councils, unions, churches and business groups. All of these activities involve a media component. The working groups have developed networks with the local media and keep them informed, as well as seeking specific opportunities for negotiators to be interviewed by reporters and appear on radio talk shows.

An important aspect of public information work at the local level is developing partnerships and alliances with community groups. Efforts are under way on a continuing basis to develop linkages with educational institutions, business associations and community organizations in an attempt to encourage ongoing dialogue with the communities.

(1345)

The Deputy Speaker: I am sorry to tell the hon. member that his time has expired. Perhaps there will be more in questions and comments.

Mr. Jim Abbott (Kootenay East, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I am inclined to agree with the member who as I understood it stated that we cannot have a true settlement unless the grassroots are consulted.

The inference I took was that he was saying the grassroots at the aboriginal level should be consulted. This is not a criticism; I am just stating that I was not at all clear as to whether he also believed as I do that there must be a full consultation process at the grassroots level with the non-aboriginal community as well and that they must be involved in the process.

Government Orders

He did refer to partners participating. Again, I agree with that. I believe he also mentioned about people making decisions at the top end. I suggest to him that the problem with the process as it is presently envisioned by the federal Liberal government and by the NDP government in British Columbia is that people are going to be making decisions at the top end for the non-aboriginal community and there is going to be insufficient input from the grassroots, as he put it, in the non-aboriginal community.

Since coming to Ottawa I have experienced that consultation is a word which is frequently used very liberally, if I may use a play on words, particularly by the civil service. Consultation really means that they are going to go through the process of appearing to consult, but after all is said and done, the die is cast and the decision has been made.

I would assume that the member believes in the equality of all Canadians as I do. Everyone of voting age meeting certain qualifications should have the right as a Canadian citizen to vote in any election. That also obviously extends to the broader issue of the equality of all Canadians. I wonder if the member would also agree with me that in the same way throughout this process there most probably are going to be ratification procedures for the aboriginal community which will be one person, one vote.

I wonder if the member would agree with my party's position that there also must be a ratification procedure which would be outside of the ratification by this Chamber or by the legislature in Victoria. The ratification procedure should be on the basis of one person, one vote for all people in the affected area, be they aboriginal or non-aboriginal. This would give us the qualification that all people are equal regardless of race, language, creed, colour, religion or gender. Would the member agree that in order for this process to work we must have one person, one vote by aboriginal and non-aboriginal alike in order to have a final and concluding settlement of this issue?

Mr. Dromisky: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for the questions and his perceptions. I have to agree with him that the democratic process is a viable one. All interested and concerned parties who in some way will be affected must be involved in the process.

Because the negotiating process affects all people, it is possible that those who are interested and keenly want to become involved may do so. They may contribute to the process. That is why I say it is extremely important that people at the grassroots level do not shy away from the process but contribute to it.

(1350)

When it comes to the actual decision making, whether a vote should be here or there, I am not too aware of the exact process or the technicalities involved. I am sure that all parties concerned will come to some decision as to how it should operate. I am sure they have, but I am not aware of the strategy they are using at the present time.

From what I can gather it is a consultative process, one in which consultation takes place with all parties concerned. Information flows and decisions are being made in light of the information they have generated. Alternatives are carefully examined and some consensus must be reached within a legal framework naturally by all parties concerned.

Mr. Abbott: Mr. Speaker, I have a brief supplementary to my friend.

I wonder if he would give us his personal opinion. In order for us to arrive at a proper conclusion to this process as the aboriginal community will have one person, one vote, would he agree that the non-aboriginal community that is affected by the same process should also have one person, one vote? What is his opinion?

Mr. Dromisky: Mr. Speaker, my opinion is very simple. If the issue pertains to a treaty settlement in a particular reserve or area, the people involved are the ones who should be making the decision. There is no doubt about it.

For instance in my own riding in the reserve of Fort William, if there is going to be a decision made regarding the reserve's boundaries and so forth, the people who are involved in that decision making are the ones who are on the reserve and other partners. For people who might be affected by the decision who live 10, 15, 20 miles away in my opinion I would not expect them to be actively taking part and casting a vote.

Putting it simply, the people on the reserve are the ones who are being affected by the decision. Therefore they must through this process and come to some conclusion as to how it is going to be decided.

Mr. Jack Iyerak Anawak (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I might give a lesson to the hon. member of the Reform Party on government and land claims.

In the aboriginal world, land claims have been going on for some time in which a particular group is formed to negotiate. For example the Inuit people of the Northwest Territories in the eastern Arctic formed an organization called the Tungavik Federation of Nunavut which in turn now is called Nunavut Tungavik Inc., to negotiate land claims agreements on the Inuit's behalf with the Government of Canada. The way the

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people of Canada, other than the Inuit people of the Northwest Territories, took part was through their elected representatives, the Government of Canada and their member of Parliament.

That is the process that has been used. I guess it is called the British parliamentary system where you elect your member of Parliament and he or she acts on your behalf.

In the aboriginal people's case an organization was appointed. I am sure all aboriginal groups across the country have an organization, which is negotiating on their behalf and they in turn have to ratify whatever is negotiated.

The people of Canada or people of a certain region, such as the people of British Columbia, will be represented by their elected representatives, whether it is the member of the provincial legislature or the member of Parliament for that particular region.

I wonder if the hon. member might care to expand a little more on how the information should be disseminated to the public at large about the British Columbia Treaty Commission so that the people of British Columbia because they feel involved in it will feel they have a role to play in the whole process.

(1355)

Mr. Dromisky: Mr. Speaker, I have already given some information regarding process. As many strategies as possible must be created to inform the public. It may be costly. It may be time consuming. It may be consuming in terms of human resources and so forth, but it is absolutely essential for developing the proper mental state, perceptions and so forth that as much information be given to all members of the adjacent community as well as the First Nations people.

I am sure that in the hon. member's communities as well as in a great number of communities with all the modern technology we have, with the creative individuals who exist in each community, we could come up with a multitude of very effective information giving and information sharing strategies.

Ms. Judy Bethel (Edmonton East, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I support Bill C-107, the British Columbia Treaty Commission.

As many members are aware, the process of treaty making in British Columbia includes important third party consultations. In July 1993 the federal and provincial governments announced the establishment of the Treaty Negotiation Advisory Committee, TNAC. This is a 31 member organization that is divided into four sectoral advisory groups dealing with lands and forests, wildlife, fisheries and governance.

Each sectoral committee has completed interest papers which give an overview of the impact of treaties on their economic resource used and regulatory requirements. There have been several common interests identified. These include the need for certainty in treaty settlement, assured access to land base, fair

and affordable agreements and avoiding impact on the existing employment base in smaller communities.

TNAC members ensure that the interests and expertise of major industries, business, labour, environment and outdoor recreation groups and local governments are understood and are taken into consideration in treaty negotiations.

TNAC advises governments on broad province-wide concerns and provides a forum for the provision of detailed information for discussion.

The process aspect of treaty negotiations has also received considerable attention from TNAC members and their demands for a more—

The Speaker: Colleague, of course you have just started your remarks. You will have the floor immediately when we come back to the debate.

It being 2 p.m., we will now go to Statements by Members.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[English]

QUEBEC REFERENDUM

Ms. Beth Phinney (Hamilton Mountain, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the residents of Hamilton Mountain are very concerned about the referendum campaign in Quebec.

In countless conversations with my constituents many have expressed a strong desire to see Canada remain united. They want Quebecers to remain within Canada so that they do not lose the benefits of belonging to one of the world's most prosperous and successful countries. We want them as members of the Canadian family to enjoy all the privileges that entails.

As a united country, we have managed to build a prosperous and progressive society. Both Canada and Quebec are better off united.

On behalf of the residents of Hamilton Mountain, I would like to appeal to Quebecers to choose Canada and vote no on October 30.

* * *

MANITOBA

Mr. Jake E. Hoepfner (Lisgar—Marquette, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise in the House to pay tribute to Manitoba's 125th anniversary.

Over the past year, all Manitobans have celebrated the history of this great province and its place within Canada. All over the province, communities large and small have been holding events and gatherings focusing on Manitoba's 125th birthday.

The strength and prosperity of Manitoba has been built by people of many different cultures and customs. Bound together by a dedication to hard work, they have built a proud legacy that will endure long into the future.

The past year has also seen celebrations of special accomplishments in the history of Manitoba. These achievements have been a source of pride for not only Manitobans but all Canadians as well.

In this anniversary year, Manitoba serves as a shining example of what can be achieved through the fundamental values of hard work, dedication and commitment to building a strong community.

* * *

CANADIAN UNITY

Mr. Paul DeVillers (Simcoe North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I wish to pay tribute to Roger Bernard who, with the help of his organizer, Mr. Robert Feeney, was able to accumulate over 60,000 signatures in support of Canadian unity.

Mr. Bernard began a 23-day journey on July 1 of this year entitled "Canada Can Campaign '95—Standing Up for Canadian Unity" in order to deliver a message of optimism, hope and inspiration to all Canadians.

[Translation]

Mr. Bernard collected these signatures on a long trip spent running and cycling the 2,219 kilometres between Barrie, Ontario, and his hometown, Eel River Crossing, in New Brunswick. He covered an average of 100 kilometres per day and visited 23 municipalities.

Speaking on behalf of all Canadians, I want to commend Mr. Bernard for his courage and his dedication to our country.

[English]

Mr. Bernard and Mr. Feeney are in the House today.

* * *

[Translation]

REFERENDUM CAMPAIGN

Mr. Benoît Serré (Timiskaming—French River, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House today to speak to our neighbours in Quebec who are going through a period that is critical for their future. My riding, Timiskaming—French River, is on the Quebec border, and 30 per cent of the residents are francophones.

Since time immemorial, people in Northern Ontario and Northern Quebec have done business with each other. Strong ties of friendship have developed between these two regions. There is no doubt that if Quebec separates from the rest of Canada, we would see a considerable decline in the level of

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interprovincial trade. Quebec's separation would also have a devastating impact on what now constitutes Canada's strength: our trade, our economy, our national and international relations and especially our two cultures.

Dear friends and neighbours in Quebec, there are no problems we cannot solve in order to build this beautiful country together. So on October 30, decide to grow with Canada and say no to separation.

* * *

FRANCOPHONES OUTSIDE QUEBEC

Mr. Dan McTeague (Ontario, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Bloc Quebecois gives us a false impression of its interest in the situation of francophones outside Quebec. Compare the insincerity of its comments on the decline of francophones outside Quebec with the following statement sent by the mayor of Whitby to the mayor of Longueuil, as part of an exchange of letters between the two twin cities. It indicates that francophones outside Quebec have not been assimilated and have contributed to the education of dynamic communities.

As Mayor Edwards said: "I can assure you of the fond admiration and deep attachment felt by all citizens who have taken part in twinning activities since 1969, for our friends and colleagues in the city of Longueuil; I am convinced that the feeling is mutual.

In Whitby, there are tangible and permanent signs of these exchanges which gladden my heart. From my window, for instance, I see Longueuil Park. A little to the north, Charles Garnier school is under construction, a school for French immersion which reminds us of the presence and growth of francophone communities in our country".

* * *

REFERENDUM CAMPAIGN

Mr. Osvaldo Nunez (Bourassa, BQ): Mr. Speaker, last week, the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs went so far as to call the sovereignists racists. This insulting epithet is not worthy of a parliamentarian and certainly not of a minister. I have spent my whole life fighting against racism, discrimination and injustice and for the rights of minorities, immigrants and refugees. I am not at all a racist.

Furthermore, I can assure you that sovereignists are tolerant and open to cultural diversity, as are the thousands of voters in the riding of Bourassa, in Montreal North, who voted for me, a candidate of Latin American origin.

The Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs should publicly apologize for these gross and unwarranted attacks which were directed to more than 50 per cent of the people of Quebec.

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[English]

NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Mr. Mike Scott (Skeena, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the NDP has always painted itself as the defender of the little guy, the downtrodden and the poor. It is time for a reality check.

Recent news stories in British Columbia reveal that British Columbia's New Democratic Party and a related fundraising group used a web of deceitful accounting and shady payoffs to rip off charities for years. NDP headquarters has been raided on the execution of search warrants alleging theft and fraud of more than one million dollars.

This scandal has serious implications for this House. Several former members are implicated in the diversion of charity funds. The question is how much money flowed from NCHS to finance federal NDP campaigns?

(1405)

In a 1987 letter former NDP MP Dave Stupich claims that the Nanaimo Commonwealth Holding Society contributed substantially to the New Democratic Party at the local, provincial and federal levels.

On behalf of the charities involved and all members of the House, I demand that the investigators broaden their scope past the B.C. border to include contributions made to federal—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Regina—Qu'Appelle.

* * *

NATIONAL PAROLE BOARD

Mr. Simon de Jong (Regina—Qu'Appelle, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Helen Betty Osborne, a 19-year-old Métis girl, was brutally murdered in 1971 in The Pas, Manitoba. Sixteen years later Dwayne Archie Johnston was the only person convicted for the crime and sentenced to a life sentence with no eligibility of parole for ten years. An aboriginal justice inquiry also determined that the murder was clearly motivated by racism.

Today, only seven years after his conviction, Mr. Johnston is out on day parole and can enjoy his weekends outside the prison. Newspaper reports state that there are a number of serious factual errors in the parole board's file on Mr. Johnston and that he "narrated his version of events in an emotionally flat, bland manner, as if rehearsed".

I strongly urge the parole board to seriously re-examine its decision to allow Mr. Johnston day parole.

[Translation]

REFERENDUM CAMPAIGN

Mr. Jean Landry (Lotbinière, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Foreign Affairs belittled Quebecers on the weekend by intimating that Quebec would be too small to penetrate world markets. Quebecers will simply not stand for such belittlement and will continue to maintain a steady course for sovereignty, despite the waves created and the flotsam strewn in their way by the advocates of the status quo.

In response to the minister, who claimed that voting yes was like trading an ocean liner for a rowboat, we offer the remarks of the Mayor of Granby, who said: "And I say this to you: the *Titanic* is listing dangerously. The time has come for us to get off the luxury liner in a calm and orderly fashion and board the Quebec flagship".

And this is exactly what Quebecers will do on October 30.

* * *

FRANCOPHONES OUTSIDE QUEBEC

Mr. Guy H. Arseneault (Restigouche—Chaleur, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there are others besides the Bloc member for Rimouski—Témiscouata lacking respect for francophones outside Quebec. Her separatist colleague, the PQ regional delegate for the Outaouais region, stated on October 20, with regard to francophones outside Quebec, that they are much more colonized than francophones in Quebec, so they are twice as afraid, that francophones outside Quebec are twice as frightened and doubly moved by the fear sown by the camp of the desperate.

Quebec separatists have become so arrogant toward those different from them that they think they can do anything they like. Quebecers are aware of Canada's virtues of tolerance and generosity. On October 30, they will vote no to the arrogance of the separatists.

* * *

REFERENDUM CAMPAIGN

Mr. Eugène Bellemare (Carleton—Gloucester, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in a week it will be October 30, and Quebecers will have to vote in the referendum on Quebec's separation.

Before they vote, they should ask the following questions. Do you want Quebec to separate? Do you want Quebec to stop being part of Canada? Should Quebec become a foreign country? Do you no longer want to be represented in Canada's Parliament, that is, no longer elect members in a federal election? Do you want to give up all that you, your parents and your grandparents have built in this country?

Quebecers know Canada. It is their country. They have always had their place here. They know that Canada can be improved to better meet their aspirations and they will prove it by voting no on October 30.

* * *

REFERENDUM CAMPAIGN

Mr. Francis G. LeBlanc (Cape Breton Highlands—Canso, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, one of the key arguments used by the separatist spokespersons in justifying their plan to separate Quebec is the issue of protection and survival of the French language.

It is claimed that French is in danger in Quebec and the only way to ensure its future is to break Canada apart this coming October 30.

How can the separatists make such an exaggeration concerning the French language, when they are preparing in their project of separation to condemn more than a million francophones outside Quebec to isolation?

In Canada, the French language knows no borders, no colour, no race. This coming October 30, Quebecers will say no to the abandonment of their millions of francophone neighbours, and a strong Quebec will remain within a Canada which, too, will be strong and united.

* * *

(1410)

REFERENDUM CAMPAIGN

Mr. Roger Pomerleau (Anjou—Rivière-des-Prairies, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the following is a comment that was made in May 1990 on the Prime Minister of Canada's position with respect to Quebec. It was said that "For a year he has made political hay at the expense of Quebecers by telling English Canada that there would be no problem in Quebec if the Meech Lake Accord failed".

And who was the author of this commentary? A sovereignist? Not in the least. It was the present Minister of Finance who was denouncing the intransigence of the Prime Minister of Canada with regard to the demands of Quebec.

It is all very well for the Prime Minister of Canada to try to rewrite history, casting himself in the role of Captain Quebec, but Quebecers remember that the person who was pulling the strings to make Meech fail in its attempt to meet the minimal demands of Quebec to reintegrate the Canadian Constitution was none other than the "little guy from Shawinigan".

If we vote no, we are again placing the fate of Quebec in the hands of the man who, to again quote his Minister of Finance, "went off to Ottawa to put Quebec in its place".

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REFERENDUM CAMPAIGN

Mr. Bob Ringma (Nanaimo—Cowichan, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, is Quebec a distinct society, or is it not?

We reformers believe it is, but we also believe that the other provinces have some distinguishing elements as well.

In our opinion, all provinces should have the same status within Confederation, just as all Canadians should be equal in the eyes of the law.

We have therefore reached the conclusion that it is possible to ensure equality and the recognition of languages and cultures. All that this would require would be to give the provinces primary responsibility for language and culture.

* * *

REFERENDUM CAMPAIGN

Mrs. Pierrette Ringuette—Maltais (Madawaska—Victoria, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the contempt with which the Bloc member from Rimouski—Témiscouata referred to francophones outside Quebec is absolutely unacceptable. It illustrates the kind of threat the separatist platform represents for francophones in other provinces.

Canada's francophones now know perfectly well that a separate Quebec would have no interest in introducing measures to promote the French fact in Canada.

Quebecers, however, are very sensitive to the issue of protecting the French language. They will not let the separation of Quebec threaten the future of more than one million francophone compatriots.

On October 30, they will vote no, because they do not want the French language to disappear in Canada. We will not let the separatist magician make us disappear with a wave of his magic wand.

* * *

REFERENDUM CAMPAIGN

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, francophones outside Quebec continued throughout the weekend to react to the intolerable comments made by the Bloc member from Rimouski—Témiscouata.

We all remember that last week, the Bloc member said in the House, and I quote: "According to Statistics Canada, there are one million francophones outside Quebec, but just 640,000 speak French. They have been assimilated—the francophones—poof!" she said, making fun of us francophones outside Quebec.

Director General Georges Arès of the Association canadienne française de l'Alberta said, and I quote: "The future of francophones in Alberta is more promising than ever before". Mr. Arès was referring, for instance, to a commitment by Premier Ralph Klein regarding school governance by Franco-Albertans.

Oral Questions

Francophones across Canada, including those in Quebec, feel insulted. As Murray Maltais said in *Le Droit*, referring to the hon. member in question: "She says what she thinks, but she does not always think about what she says".

* * *

[English]

GASTON TREMBLAY

Mr. Darrel Stinson (Okanagan—Shuswap, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, on October 16 I attended the funeral of a great Canadian, my friend Gaston Tremblay, whom I always knew as Gus, a native of Quebec.

Gus retired to my riding in 1984 after a distinguished career in the RCMP. Gus had a talent for numbers, which he used as an RCMP auditor but also as a volunteer treasurer for many community organizations, including the Royal Canadian Legion and the Reform Party as my official agent during the election campaign. He attained a high rank in the Knights of Columbus and was past president of both the RCMP Veterans Association and Gateby intermediate care facilities.

(1415)

His talent with numbers gave him special insight regarding our national debt and as treasurer of any group he guarded their every dollar. Gus was a man of passionate convictions. He dearly loved his country and rejected the idea of hyphenated Canadians.

I extend my sympathies to his family members and join them in their grief. Gus Tremblay, my friend, will be sorely missed.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[Translation]

REFERENDUM CAMPAIGN

Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval, BQ): Mr. Speaker, after an urgent appeal from the chair of the No committee, Mr. Daniel Johnson, who asked him to announce his position on the issues of distinct society, veto rights and elimination of overlap, the Prime Minister of Canada, after humiliating his ally, Daniel Johnson, in New York by refusing to do so, finally agreed to issue a joint statement with Mr. Johnson dealing only with distinct society, and I will quote part of the statement:

We remind you that we have both supported the inclusion of this principle in the Canadian Constitution every time Quebec has demanded it.

My question is directed to the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs. What explanation does the minister have for the fact

that the Prime Minister claims he has always supported the principle of a distinct society every time Quebec has demanded it, although he fought with such tenacity against the Meech Lake Accord which contained a significant definition of distinct society?

The Speaker: My dear colleagues, I would appreciate it if you would make both your questions and your answers a little shorter.

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, I think if anyone reads the last paragraph of the statement, he will know exactly what the situation is, without the embellishments added by the hon. member for Roberval. I will read the last paragraph of the statement issued jointly by the chair of the No committee and the Prime Minister of Canada:

We state unequivocally that Quebec is a distinct society. We remind you that we have both supported the inclusion of this principle in the Canadian Constitution every time Quebec has demanded it. We have not changed our opinion on this subject and we always maintain our support for this fundamental Canadian reality. We have supported it in the past; we support it today and we will support it in the future, in all circumstances.

This is a clear-cut position; it indicates exactly what the No committee and the Prime Minister of Canada believe.

Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval, BQ): Mr. Speaker, would the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs acknowledge that when the Prime Minister of Canada says that he has supported in the past, supports today and will support in the future, in all circumstances, the distinct identity of Quebec society, he is referring to the concept of distinct society in the Charlottetown Accord, a concept that was meaningless, being subordinate to the equality of the provinces, a concept that was rejected by Quebecers, and that the Prime Minister has always been opposed to the concept of distinct society as defined in the Meech Lake Accord?

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 answer is no, and once again we must emphasize that the question on October 30 will be about the separation of Quebec from Canada.

The Bloc Québécois wants to separate Quebec from Canada. As for Mr. Parizeau, when the distinct society concept was raised with him, his comment was: "I do not give a damn about distinct society, I do not want it". That is what he said. And he is the leader of the Yes committee, while we have always insisted it was possible to be both a Quebecer and a Canadian and that it is in the best interests of Quebecers to remain in Canada in order to make the changes that are needed.

Oral Questions

(1420)

Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs knows perfectly well it is unconscionable for the Prime Minister of Canada to tell his ally, the head of the No committee, that the distinct identity of Quebec society will certainly not be enshrined in the Canadian Constitution.

Will the minister at least admit that the reason the Prime Minister will not include this distinct identity in the Canadian Constitution is that he ran his campaign for the leadership of the Liberal Party on an anti-Meech Lake platform, so much so that the then Minister of Finance said in *Le Devoir* on March 9, 1990: "Jean Chrétien is about to destroy forever the credibility of the Liberals in Quebec"? Would he agree the Minister of Finance was right?

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 hon. member for the Bloc Québécois does a poor job, as he often does, unfortunately, of presenting the position of the Prime Minister of Canada.

In his speech in Quebec City last Thursday, the Prime Minister said: "Quebec is a distinct society because of its language, culture and institutions". Those who were opposed to change in recent years were the members of the Bloc Québécois and the Parti Québécois.

We should remember that the Parti Québécois not only rejected the changes proposed in the Charlottetown Accord but also campaigned to ensure that Quebec would not have the powers and jurisdictions included in Charlottetown.

We must set the record straight. Those who are in favour of continuing change and development in Canada and Quebec and who support the best interests of Quebec are not those who want to break up the country and separate Quebec, with all the negative consequences that would ensue.

Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, in the joint statement issued by the Prime Minister of Canada and the leader of the No side on the weekend in an effort to cover up the deep division between them, they say that they have not changed their minds about the distinct society and that they still believe this basic Canadian reality should be acknowledged.

Will the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs admit honestly that the real position on the notion of a distinct society is the one expressed by the Prime Minister on September 11, 1995, when he said that there was absolutely no need to enshrine in the constitution the fact that Quebec francophones are distinct from other Canadians. Dixit Jean Chrétien.

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, I am not going to repeat the last paragraph of the statement again, because the answer is the same.

However, what is important to see is that the official opposition is trying to shift attention away from the real issue of the referendum debate. In the referendum debate, the Bloc Québécois and the Parti Québécois want to separate Quebec from Canada. Their aim is not a partnership, as Mr. Bouchard has finally agreed. Their aim is not a distinct society either. These are empty questions, because Mr. Parizeau has clearly indicated that he could not care less about a distinct society.

Their aim is to separate Quebec from Canada, and they will be responsible for breaking up Canada and causing the ensuing negative effects for Quebec.

Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I would ask the minister how Quebecers can trust the Prime Minister of Canada when he claims to be in favour of the concept of a distinct society when we know those who made him head of the party, like Clyde Wells, are completely and unconditionally opposed to a distinct society—thank you Clyde, we remember—and will never permit the Prime Minister to go back on a commitment he made in the leadership race, which he won specifically because he was opposed to the Meech Lake Accord, unlike the present Minister of Finance, who was in favour.

(1425)

The Speaker: My dear colleagues, I would ask you to not use the name of any member who has sat here in this House and to always use their title as minister, if that is the case, or of leader of the opposition, rather than using their name.

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, what counts at the moment is finding out which option will enable Quebec to best cope with the problems of the world to come. The Prime Minister of Canada agreed with Charlottetown, which contained a whole series of measures that would have enabled Quebec to acquire certain jurisdictions it wanted. The Parti Québécois was the one opposed.

The option that will enable Quebec to continue to develop and cope with its problems in the future is the option that implies that Quebec will remain in Canada, where it has developed harmoniously for 128 years and that it will continue its quiet revolution within the constitution. I would point out that the first quiet revolution took place while Quebec came under the constitution.

*Oral Questions***CANADIAN ECONOMY**

Mr. Stephen Harper (Calgary West, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to change the subject from constitutional ills to the overriding economic interests of all Canadians, including Quebecers.

[*English*]

My question is for the Minister of Finance. The minister will know that the Canadian dollar is continuing to fall today in international markets.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Harper (Calgary West): I know the Bloc does not take this matter seriously but I would like to ask the question anyway.

International investors know that the prospects of a yes vote do not mean a new and better economic union between Quebec and the other provinces but the end of the economic union we have today.

What measures has the minister taken to assure the international financial community that Canada will fulfil all the financial obligations it has contracted on behalf of all Canadians including Quebecers and that it will fulfil these obligations regardless of the outcome of the Quebec referendum?

Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance and Minister responsible for the Federal Office of Regional Development—Quebec, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member has asked two questions.

In terms of the first one on the value of the dollar, as the hon. member knows Canada has a floating exchange rate. Under those circumstances the value of the dollar is established by the markets. When the occasion requires, the Bank of Canada will intervene to ensure there are orderly markets.

On the second question relating to Canada's obligations, I am very confident international and domestic markets are completely assured that Canada will under all circumstances fulfil its obligations.

However I should like to take advantage of the question asked by the hon. member to reaffirm, without any hesitation and without any equivocation, that Canada stands 100 per cent, four square behind all its obligations.

Mr. Stephen Harper (Calgary West, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, according to a recent article in the *Vancouver Sun* the Minister of Finance made reference to the fact that the premier of Quebec, Mr. Parizeau, acknowledged Quebec's liability for one-quarter of Canada's debt in a 1990 speech. This would be consistent with the stated desire of the separatist government to use the Canadian dollar.

Has the minister sought any public reassurance at this time from the Government of Quebec to the international financial community that it would maintain its full share of Canada's financial obligations regardless of the outcome of the Quebec referendum?

Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance and Minister responsible for the Federal Office of Regional Development—Quebec, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, again the hon. member accurately reflects a citation by the current premier of Quebec that in the event of separation he felt Quebec's share of the national debt should be proportionate to its share of the population, i.e. 25 per cent. That is a position that has also been reflected by a number of the leading separatist leaders.

I think we all understand the tremendous negative consequences that would flow from any kind of break up of the country, in turn leading as well to negotiations over the debt. That is why I reaffirm that it is very clear that what we are dealing with here is not an offer of partnership. It is not some kind of an amiable separation. We are dealing with the rupture of the country.

(1430)

The fact is this debate is about the future of Canada.

Mr. Stephen Harper (Calgary West, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, speaking of the rupture the minister refers to, he will know that during this campaign Mr. Lucien Bouchard, the Leader of the Opposition, has indicated that—

The Speaker: I ask you, colleagues, to please refer to either the riding or the title of a person rather than their name.

Mr. Harper (Calgary West): Thank you for that reminder, Mr. Speaker.

The Leader of the Opposition has indicated during this campaign that Quebec might renege on its share of Canada's debt obligations. Of course a statement like that is not at all consistent with the stated desire of the Government of Quebec to use the Canadian dollar.

Has the Minister of Finance sought to reassure international financial markets that the Leader of the Opposition is not a member of either the Government of Canada or the Government of Quebec and may not speak for either in this regard?

[*Translation*]

Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance and Minister responsible for the Federal Office of Regional Development—Quebec, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, first, I think the point is a valid one. The Leader of the Opposition will not be speaking for anyone in the event of separation; the Premier of Quebec is Mr. Parizeau. So, clearly, Mr. Bouchard will be out of things.

An hon. member: Name the riding.

Mr. Martin: Ah, yes. No, I did not mention his name.

Oral Questions

Mr. Speaker, as regards the use of the Canadian dollar, I think the Leader of the Opposition and the Premier of Quebec have deliberately created an ambiguity. They talk about using the Canadian dollar, and yet, on two occasions—in Ahuntsic, last week, and in Portneuf, six or eight months ago—the Leader of the Opposition said very clearly that the separatists intended giving up the certainty of the Canadian dollar for the uncertainty of the Quebec dollar.

When we ask ourselves where this double talk is coming from, we know very well. Mr. Parizeau wrote in *L'Actualité* that it was simply a ruse, that he intended to favour the Canadian dollar, but that, ultimately, he wanted a Quebec dollar.

* * *

REFERENDUM CAMPAIGN

Mr. Michel Bellehumeur (Berthier—Montcalm, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs.

The desperate appeal by the leader of the no side, Daniel Johnson, to the Prime Minister of Canada addressed not only the distinct society but also Quebec's right of veto and the elimination of duplication and overlap between the federal government and the Government of Quebec. These elements are covered in the document currently being distributed by the no side, via the director general of elections.

Since the joint document has absolutely nothing to say on the question of the right of veto and the elimination of duplication and overlap, can the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs tell us whether the Prime Minister will give in to Mr. Johnson's plea and make his point of view known to the people of Quebec on these two issues before the 30th?

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 official opposition is clearly attempting to cloud the issue; it is spreading ideas that are totally contrary to reality. On the question of a distinct society, the leader of the no committee and the Prime Minister have stated their position very clearly.

In the case of the right to veto, the no manifesto is clear, and the Prime Minister has also indicated that the entire membership of the no side approves. But the problem we are facing now in the referendum is that the official opposition is attempting to make people believe that the referendum is about something other than separation. That is why we must repeat again and again that what the Bloc Québécois and the Parti Québécois are attempting to do, what their leaders clearly state as their intention, is to separate Quebec from Canada. There is no other truth, and the opposition's questions are aimed at having Quebecers believe something that does not correspond to reality. The issue is separation.

(1435)

Mr. Michel Bellehumeur (Berthier—Montcalm, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the chair of the no committee has been very clear in making this urgent appeal for the Prime Minister to make his point of view known on the distinct society, the right of veto and the elimination of duplication and overlap before October 30, Daniel Johnson has said so himself.

Why does the government persist in concealing its true intentions from Quebecers? What more is there that you want to conceal from Quebecers?

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, unfortunately, when it comes to concealing things from Quebecers, I believe that we have said, and have proof of having said, what was going to happen; it is the members of the opposition who have tried to make Quebecers believe that partnership is possible.

It is the members of the opposition who have tried to make people believe that a large number of Quebecers could retain their Canadian passports. And it is the members of the opposition too who are trying to convince people that it will be possible for Quebecers to keep the Canadian dollar.

I would submit to you, Mr. Speaker, that it is the members of the opposition who are trying to invent stories, tell stories, fairy tales, to the people of Quebec. I repeat, October 30 is about separation. That is what the leaders of the Parti Québécois and the Bloc Québécois are saying and it is the truth.

* * *

[English]

NATIONAL DEFENCE

Mr. Jim Hart (Okanagan—Similkameen—Merritt, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of National Defence.

Armed forces personnel can collect a non-taxable separation expense for a period of up to one year when posted. Documents obtained show that for a three-year period then Major-General Armand Roy collected over \$50,000 in non-taxable separation expenses. This is scandalous.

Almost every day I rise in the House and question the minister about the mismanagement of his department. What does the minister have to say about this one today?

Mr. Fred Mifflin (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Minister of National Defence, as parliamentary secretary, in response to the question from the hon. member, who spent a lot of time with me as a member of the special joint committee on defence—

Oral Questions

Mr. Hermanson: Answer the question.

Mr. Mifflin: I will answer the question if you would listen.

An hon. member: And learn.

Mr. Mifflin: He was very strong and very adamant in saying that mobility in the Canadian forces is a very strong thing. He wants to help morale with these kinds of questions? Give me a break.

Mr. Jim Hart (Okanagan—Similkameen—Merritt, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, Canadians would hope that this is an isolated incident. Unfortunately, it is not.

Access to information documents show that Rear Admiral Keller, who is currently the chief of financial services at NDHQ, was in receipt of separation expenses for over four years, totalling \$86,000. At the same time, able seamen in Esquimalt are in welfare line-ups trying to feed their families.

This is an example of the minister's mismanagement. How can the minister allow this to go on under his nose?

Mr. Fred Mifflin (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I do have to tell members in all honesty that it is very difficult for me to find an answer to this kind of question.

Mr. Mills (Red Deer): There is no answer.

Mr. Mifflin: In order to have an answer, there has to be a question. There has been no question. The hon. member is talking about money paid to senior officers to ensure mobility in the Canadian forces. He signed on as part of his participation—

Mr. Mills (Red Deer): Out of control.

Mr. Mifflin: He signed on as part of supporting mobility. He cannot take his signature away from that report. It is there and it is immutable. It cannot be changed. I used to think he was credible.

* * *

(1440)

[Translation]

REFERENDUM CAMPAIGN

Mrs. Pauline Picard (Drummond, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs.

Last spring, the Prime Minister mentioned that one of the ways to eliminate duplication by Quebec and Ottawa would be to let Ottawa collect all taxes from Quebecers. Last week, the

Minister of Foreign Affairs again suggested this as a way to eliminate duplication.

Could the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs tell us whether the Prime Minister or the minister himself or his colleagues discussed with Daniel Johnson the approach suggested by the Minister of Foreign Affairs for reducing duplication, in other words, to have all taxes payable by Quebecers collected by the federal government and to close the Travail Québec centres?

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, as far as duplication is concerned, I think what we must consider here is whether both parties are acting in good faith when they want to negotiate agreements to eliminate overlap.

I may point out that before the Parti Quebecois was elected, we had signed twelve agreements with the province of Quebec to eliminate duplication. We have signed a total of 64 such agreements with the other provinces. However, since the Parti Quebecois was elected on September 12, no agreements concerning duplication have been negotiated.

My point is that the Parti Quebecois has shown it did not have the slightest interest in reducing overlap of any kind because, as Mr. Parizeau pointed out, it is not interested in making federalism work. It wants to get out. That is their goal, that is what they want to do, and that is what they are working for.

Mrs. Pauline Picard (Drummond, BQ): Mr. Speaker, would the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs acknowledge that the last federal proposal on eliminating duplication and overlap was an agreement on manpower which was turned down by Daniel Johnson, the Premier at the time, and by the present Minister of Labour, who both called this agreement unsatisfactory?

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, what the Quebec Minister of Labour called the agreement does not alter the facts.

The facts are that the federal government offered to transfer to the provinces, including the province of Quebec, all spending on educational institutions in the provinces, including both programs and money. The province of Quebec turned down this offer and in my opinion proved once again they did not want to negotiate any accommodation with the federal government.

We are prepared to make certain accommodations, but they are only interested in separation.

Oral Questions

[English]

CANDU REACTORS

Mr. Charlie Penson (Peace River, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, this government has a long history of using tax dollars to fund megaprojects that end up costing us billions. Petro-Canada is just one example.

Now the Chinese premier has visited Canada and walked away with another megaproject deal. The government is planning to use the Canada account to finance Atomic Energy's sale of two CANDU reactors to China.

Does the government not realize it is broke? Does it not realize Canada cannot afford to finance a dime, never mind several billion dollars worth of taxpayers' money on this sale?

Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance and Minister responsible for the Federal Office of Regional Development—Quebec, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member ought to take pride in export sales of Canadian technologies. These sales are done on a basis that will provide the maximum amount of returns to the Canadian public. I can assure the hon. member this will be the case here.

The Chinese market, I do not need to remind anybody, is a very important market and is one that is growing at considerable length. It is important that this country establish itself.

On the first point regarding Petro-Canada, thanks to the minister of energy and mines we have completed the most successful privatization of almost any western country in the past decade.

Mr. Charlie Penson (Peace River, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I think they gave it away.

My supplemental is to the Minister of Natural Resources, since that is who was quoted here. I quote that minister even further: "The Canadian government will no longer be in the business of negotiating massive support packages for energy megaprojects". If we are not subsidizing megaprojects at home any more, why are we considering doing it overseas where the risk to the taxpayer is even greater?

(1445)

Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let me point out to the hon. member that export financing is a normal part of doing business in this country and in most other countries.

As the Minister of Finance has pointed out in relation to Candu technology, we have technology which is second to none in the world. We want that technology to help solve the energy problems of nations such as China. If we are going to compete with other nations in relation to that technology, it is important to provide export financing.

[Translation]

REFERENDUM CAMPAIGN

Mrs. Pierrette Venne (Saint-Hubert, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs.

Last week, the deputy chair of the no committee, Ms. Liza Frulla, demanded that Ottawa withdraw completely from the area of culture, declaring that Ottawa had no business interfering in this area of exclusive Quebec jurisdiction.

Can the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs tell us whether it is his feeling that, in the field of culture as in the other questions raised by Daniel Johnson, Quebecers will be given no response before October 30?

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, all of the questions by the Official Opposition are along the same lines and our response is that the federation, that Canada, has been very flexible in the past.

It has allowed the province of Quebec, like the other provinces, to acquire a considerable amount of power, even spending power. In the sixties, the federal government had around 60 per cent of the spending power, and now it is the provinces and municipalities which have more than that 60 per cent.

The immigration agreement is one that was signed without any constitutional amendment. It is totally possible to settle the problems that exist without constitutional amendments. And if I may remind the Opposition of one final point, it is they who refused to allow Quebec the decentralization contained in the Charlottetown Accord, while the Prime Minister approved it.

Mrs. Pierrette Venne (Saint-Hubert, BQ): A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker.

How can the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs expect the people of Quebec to think that there would be a place for Quebec in his Canada after a no in the referendum, when we are familiar with the points of view of his Prime Minister's best buddies, Clyde Wells and Roy Romanow, and when we know that his Prime Minister systematically refuses to give any hope whatsoever and any response whatsoever to the pleadings of his allies on the no side?

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, there has always been a place in my heart, in my soul, in my intellect, for Quebec as a part of Canada, because it is within Canada that Quebec succeeded in developing the world's best standard of living.

Oral Questions

It is within Canada that Quebec and the people of Quebec have succeeded in attaining a level of democracy unequalled anywhere in the world. In what country in the world could there be a leader of the opposition with the right to speak out in the House on what he sees as the future of Canada as an entity?

I am proud to belong to a country with such democratic values. I am proud to belong to a country which values sharing as Canada does. I am proud to belong to a country which redistributes the wealth of advantaged provinces to the least advantaged. And for these reasons, the men and women of Quebec will vote no in the referendum on October 30.

* * *

[English]

HEALTH CARE

Mr. Gurbax Singh Malhi (Bramalea—Gore—Malton, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the health care system is a source of great pride for Canadians all across the country. It is an important component of our nation's identity. The constituents of Bramalea—Gore—Malton and indeed all Canadians are worried that their health care benefits may be reduced or eliminated.

(1450)

Will the health minister assure Canadians that the basic principles of the health care system will never be abandoned by this government?

Hon. Diane Marleau (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, during the last election, this party committed to preserve the universal medicare system which all Canadians enjoy. We said we would also preserve the five principles of the Canada Health Act, but that we would work as active partners in order to make our health care system more efficient and more effective to address changing realities.

We also said that we would not support a system which offered better quality or faster access for rich Canadians versus the rest of Canadians. We have acted on this. That is what the October 15 deadline was all about. Canadians from coast to coast, wherever they live can rest assured that this government will continue to protect and enhance our health care system.

* * *

GASOLINE ADDITIVES

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

The minister has stated before in the House that he supports uniformity of gasoline standards between Canada and the United States. As the minister is aware, this past Friday the U.S. Court of Appeals ruled in favour of Ethyl Corporation to sell the gasoline additive MMT in the U.S. This is the same substance this government wants to ban.

Will the minister admit that in view of the U.S. decision this government has no reason to ban MMT in Canadian gasoline, a substance that makes cars run cleaner?

Hon. John Manley (Minister of Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am sure the hon. member has a relatively recent model of motor vehicle. Mine is rather old. He should know that all the motor vehicle manufacturers, North American as well as Japanese have told us that the diagnostic systems in the new vehicles are put at risk by MMT. Consequently, warranties will not be respected by the manufacturers where MMT is used in the fuel.

This is the purpose of the gasoline. That is why it is made. That is what it is used for. Surely to goodness the hon. member would like to ensure that the industry has the opportunity to respond if indeed the determination in the U.S. continues to hold. In fact, at this time MMT is not available in fuel in the United States.

Mr. Paul E. Forseth (New Westminster—Burnaby, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, Reform has long pushed this government to conduct independent scientific tests on MMT, yet our view is scoffed at. Legislation to ban is now known not to have been based on good science at all. Obviously, the decision was politically partisan rather than to help the environment.

Will the Minister of Industry admit that Reform was right all along? Will he admit that there should have been independent tests before trying to ban it, a ban that now appears to be completely useless in view of the minister's harmonization goals?

Hon. John Manley (Minister of Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I do not know where the hon. member stands except awfully close to the petroleum companies on this particular issue.

I can tell him where we stand. We stand with the consumers. We stand with the people who are purchasing the vehicles that are using the fuel. We stand with the people who are looking to have their warranties respected. We need to have standards that are consistent north and south of the border. They are not right; they are wrong. Let them talk to the makers of the vehicles.

* * *

[Translation]

REFERENDUM CAMPAIGN

Mr. René Laurin (Joliette, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs. Last week he said that federal buildings in the Outaouais area and elsewhere in Quebec would remain federal property until negotiations on them were concluded.

Oral Questions

(1455)

[English]

Will the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs acknowledge as well that common sense and reason along with the rules and practices of international law in the matter of state succession provide very clearly that, when sovereignty is proclaimed, all of the assets of the federal government located on Quebec territory automatically become the property of Quebec?

Hon. Marcel Massé (President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister responsible for Public Service Renewal, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I see the opposition is opinionated, not to mention hard of hearing. This is the sort of question that makes it hard to concentrate on the goal of the referendum. The goal of the referendum is as follows: "Do you want to separate from Canada?" This is the question. All the rest are hypothetical questions, which have no bearing.

In the present matter, once again, we must not get carried away with marginal issues. What those of us on the no side want is for Quebecers to remain in the federation, because it is in their interest and in Canadians' interest for them to do so and this is why we are going to vote no.

Mr. René Laurin (Joliette, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I would point out to the minister that we are talking about what he said himself. So if there is a diversion, he is the cause of it.

As Quebec has paid for over 20 per cent of all federal assets in the rest of Canada and abroad, will the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs acknowledge that Quebec will be entitled as well to its share in the ownership of these other federal assets and this is why Canada will hasten to negotiate a quick and equitable division the day after the referendum?

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 statement I made is true, it speaks for itself and it stands. What is important is that, in the last week of the referendum, we can no longer divert Quebecers' attention onto such matters, we must concentrate on the basic issue, because a third of the voters in Quebec still believe they will continue to remain in Canada, even if they say yes. This is wrong. Quebecers must know the truth, and the truth is that separation will mean they can no longer live in Canada.

GOVERNMENT APPOINTMENTS

Mr. Lee Morrison (Swift Current—Maple Creek—Assiniboia, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, Robert Heinrich, the committee chair of federal affairs for the Liberal Association of Saskatchewan, was my opponent in the last federal election. Guess what? He has been appointed to the National Parole Board. On a daily basis, that is more lucrative work than being an MP. It pays to be a loser if you are a Liberal.

Can the solicitor general describe to the House the rigorous selection and screening process used to assess the qualifications of appointees to these plum positions?

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the position was the subject of a public advertisement. Candidates submitted applications. The applications were reviewed by the chair of the parole board who carried out an interview process and made recommendations. It was on the basis of competence and merit that the decision was made.

Mr. Lee Morrison (Swift Current—Maple Creek—Assiniboia, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, at least there is consistency here. A few months ago, Mr. Heinrich's campaign manager received her reward. She was appointed to the board of the Farm Credit Corporation.

My question is for anybody over there who feels competent to answer it. After all the defeated Liberal candidates and all of their campaign managers have received their lollies, what is going to be done for all of those hardworking Liberals who handed out—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Edmonton East.

* * *

HUMAN RIGHTS

Ms. Judy Bethel (Edmonton East, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

All Canadians value our well earned reputation throughout the world for being a nation with a deep respect for human rights. Canadians continue to be concerned about the human rights situation in Mexico, our NAFTA partner.

(1500)

Can the minister tell us how the government is responding to those concerns?

Hon. André Ouellet (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for giving me advance notice of her question.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

Speaker's Ruling

Mr. Ouellet: There is some courtesy in Parliament sometimes. I certainly appreciate this. If other members want to do the same thing I will gladly accept their advance questions.

The human rights president of Mexico, Jorge Madrazo, was in Ottawa some time ago. He met with the Canadian human rights commissioner. They have agreed to exchange information, to work together and to co-operate on a very wide variety of programs which will certainly go a long way in helping Mexico to cope with its situation.

In his discussions with me Mr. Madrazo has indicated that he is quite pleased with the co-operation he is receiving from his government and hopes to see progress in this regard in the near future.

* * *

STATUS OF WOMEN

Mr. Simon de Jong (Regina—Qu'Appelle, NDP): Mr. Speaker, my question is addressed to the Minister of Finance.

At the recent Beijing conference the government committed itself to implementing gender based analysis throughout federal departments and agencies. The need for this analysis is to determine the different social and economic impacts that government policies will have on women and men.

Will his department ensure that full gender based studies in matters relating to his next budget will be undertaken and tabled in the House when the next budget is delivered?

Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance and Minister responsible for the Federal Office of Regional Development—Quebec, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as indicated by the hon. member, the Secretary of State for the Status of Women unveiled a new policy on gender analysis which was very highly applauded by all of the countries that were there.

In the past, individual budget decisions have been studied for their impact on women. It is therefore a major step forward that now each and every government department must look within its own decision making process to make sure no decisions are taken that are hostile to women. It is the view of the government that all decisions taken should be to their benefit.

The Speaker: This brings question period to a close.

* * *

POINTS OF ORDER

BILL C-106—SPEAKER'S RULING

The Speaker: This morning the hon. member for Nanaimo—Cowichan rose on a point of order relating to Standing Order 45 and the timing of the deferred vote scheduled for 5.30 p.m. this day.

His argument is that this vote should have been scheduled for 6.30 p.m., pursuant to Standing Order 45(6)(a), when a vote is deferred on a Thursday.

The hon. parliamentary secretary to the government House leader counter-argued that Standing Order 45(5)(a)(ii) allows the chief government whip to designate another time than the ordinary hour of adjournment so long as he does not set the vote down for a Friday.

I have reviewed the matter and find that the wording of Standing Order 45(6)(a) is very specific. It reads as follows:

A division deferred on Thursday is not held on Friday, but is instead deferred to the next sitting day, at the ordinary hour of daily adjournment.

Because of this very specific wording I can only conclude that the hon. member for Nanaimo—Cowichan has a point. Standing Order 45(6)(a) clearly states what is to happen when a deferral of a division is requested on a Thursday and a Friday.

The hon. parliamentary secretary to the government House leader did allude to a possible incongruity between the two standing orders. He may wish to pursue that aspect with the committee that he so ably chairs.

(1505)

For now, and until the House changes the wording of the standing orders, requests by a single whip, acting alone, for the deferral of a division on a Thursday will be automatically set down at the ordinary hour of adjournment on the next sitting day that is not a Friday.

QUESTION PERIOD

Mr. Ray Speaker (Lethbridge, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order with regard to the question put by my hon. colleague from Swift Current—Maple Creek—Assiniboia. I raise it under citation 485 of Beaudesne. I ask whether you ruled his question out of order on the basis of—

The Speaker: I ruled the question out of order and that is why I never permitted an answer for it. I found that the question was just not in keeping with the administrative responsibilities of anyone identifiable. I found that it was a matter of what was going on in the party and that does not include what we do here in the House for answers from ministers.

I would like to let that matter sit right there.

QUESTION PERIOD

Mr. Ray Speaker (Lethbridge, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, is it appropriate to ask for clarification of a ruling by the Chair? Can a member ask a question for clarification purposes only with regard to a ruling and not on the basis of challenging the Speaker? I certainly understand that rule in Beaudesne, but for clarification cannot a point of order be raised?

The Speaker: Hon. members collectively have empowered me as the Speaker to make decisions on what will be in order or out of order in question period. I take this responsibility very seriously.

The hon. member has asked if he can rise on a point of clarification. If an hon. member wants clarification I will be very happy to speak with him or her in my chambers. I find that I am being asked more and more for clarification of decisions that I have taken in the course of question period. I hope that most members feel that the decisions I take are taken in the best interests of the House.

With regard to the points that come up I beg that you give me latitude so I can carry out question period in a judicious manner. Of course a point of clarification can be raised but many times when a point is raised I am led into hypothetical cases which could be misinterpreted.

Therefore, if members will agree, I would prefer that if you have points to be clarified about a particular decision I will be happy to speak to you in my chambers about it. When we keep having these discussions come up time and time again I feel that what is being questioned, not necessarily in this case but in some instances, is the decision itself. I hope you would give me enough room to make those decisions.

BILL C-106

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this is in reference to the decision made by the Speaker with regard to the vote tonight.

For the benefit of all members, some who may not have been physically in the Chamber at the time of Mr. Speaker's ruling, I take it that the vote for today only, without creating a precedent, will remain at 5.30 p.m. Perhaps Mr. Speaker can indicate that.

(1510)

Second, there has been informal consultation between the Reform Party whip and myself to bring the matter as per the Speaker's suggestion to the procedure and House affairs committee in order to attempt to make more uniform the rules as they apply to every single day of the week rather than the ambiguity which some could perceive as being in the rules at the present time.

The Speaker: My colleague, it is my understanding that if the whips of the major parties agree that the vote will be at 5.30, which I presume is the agreement reached, I do not have to ask for unanimous consent of the House.

I see the three whips in front of me now and there is no question but that the vote is going to be at 5.30 and that is so ordered.

Routine Proceedings

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[*Translation*]

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

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

* * *

[*English*]

MOTION NO. 383

Mr. Rey D. Pagtakhan (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, through you I seek the unanimous consent of the House for me to withdraw my private members' Motion No. 383, now in the order of precedence, on the subject of cigarette lighters and the Hazardous Products Act. The government has already taken the action intended by my private motion since it was tabled last February 6.

The Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

(Motion withdrawn.)

* * *

PETITIONS

GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS

Mr. Andy Scott (Fredericton—York—Sunbury, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing order 36, I am pleased to present on behalf of over 100 signators from the the riding of Fredericton—York—Sunbury a petition which deals specifically with the proposal from the interdepartmental committee on household goods to remove services and change the way the federal government purchases moving services by offering all federal government moves to one carrier.

The petitioners pray and call on Parliament to direct the interdepartmental committee to drop the proposal and to work directly with the Canadian moving industry to develop other alternatives to reduce federal expenditures.

CRIMINAL CODE

Mr. Werner Schmidt (Okanagan Centre, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I present to the House a petition on behalf of our young children. It is a petition signed by 65,000 people. The petitioners ask the House to amend the Criminal Code to prohibit pardons for those convicted of sex offences against children.

Routine Proceedings

They also ask that the Criminal Code be amended to prohibit for life all those convicted of sexual offences against children from holding responsible positions of trust and or great responsibility regarding children.

I ask the House to take seriously a petition from 65,000 citizens from British Columbia.

INCOME TAX

Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36, I wish to present a petition that has been circulating all across Canada. The petition has been signed by a number of Canadians in Calgary, Alberta.

The petitioners would like to draw to the attention of the House that managing the family home and caring for preschool children is an honourable profession which has not been recognized for its value to our society. They also state that the Income Tax Act discriminates against families that make the choice to provide care in the home to preschool children, the disabled, the chronically ill or the aged.

The petitioners therefore pray and call on Parliament to pursue initiatives to eliminate tax discrimination against families that decide to provide care in the home for preschool children, the disabled, the chronically ill or the aged.

CRIMINAL CODE

Mr. Jim Abbott (Kootenay East, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, considering the very unfortunate events that have taken place on the lower mainland relative to the murder of a young lady and other events relating to that, it is very timely that I received in my office today a petition to return the rights to the citizens from criminals.

(1515)

Some of the points refer to keeping dangerous sex offenders and pedophiles locked up for life, eliminating statutory release and imposing stiffer sentences for violent offenders.

NATIONAL DEFENCE

Ms. Roseanne Skoke (Central Nova, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36 I have a petition to present on behalf of my constituents.

It has been traditional that the Government of Canada divide the national defence related furniture moving business among local independent movers on an equitable basis, which policy has provided excellent service at reasonable rates.

The petitioners pray and call upon Parliament to resolve to veto any proposed change to the present tendering process of the Department of National Defence and to support the present system of tendering.

MERCHANT NAVY

Ms. Margaret Bridgman (Surrey North, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I rise to present a petition on behalf of Surrey North constituents and other Canadians. There are about 400 signatures.

The constituents draw attention to the record of the merchant navy in World War II as the fourth arm of the armed forces and call upon the government for benefits similar to those enjoyed by veterans.

It is also my hope that the government will follow through on its commitment to recognize veteran merchant seamen who were put in harm's way due to the war.

FORESTS

Mrs. Beryl Gaffney (Nepean, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have two sets of petitions to present. The first group of petitioners, some 63 of them, is saying that the cutting of old growth forests diminishes the national diversity of our environment, our country, our culture and our people.

The petitioners request that Parliament order an immediate moratorium on the cutting of old growth forest reserves to promote the policy internationally.

JOB EXPERIENCE

Mrs. Beryl Gaffney (Nepean, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the second petition is from 94 petitioners who say that job experience is a vital part of an individual's education and that we need to positively influence all aspects of business potential.

Therefore the petitioners request that Parliament increase the co-operative aspect between productive business enterprises and education systems.

HIGH RISK OFFENDERS

Mr. Charlie Penson (Peace River, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I have before me a petition that has been signed by 424 people.

These people are very concerned that high risk offenders upon their release from prison are more and more frequently committing crimes that result in serious personal injury.

The petitioners believe that there would be fewer such incidents if Parliament would enact legislation permitting the use of post-sentence detention orders. Specifically the petitioners request that Parliament pass Bill C-240 dealing with high risk offenders.

YOUNG OFFENDERS ACT

Mr. Tom Wappel (Scarborough West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have three petitions to present, two of which concern the Young Offenders Act.

The first one was motivated by the sad death of Vivi Leimonis or Georgina Leimonis. The petitioners request that Parliament recognize and address the concerns stated in the petition and

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amend the Criminal Code of Canada and the Young Offenders Act accordingly, providing heavier penalties for those convicted of violent crime. Police departments must also be provided with adequate funds to ensure the safety and security of the public.

The second petition was occasioned by the violent death in my riding of Mr. Louis Amba and the petitioners are primarily from my riding.

They pray and request that Parliament amend the Young Offenders Act to provide that young offenders charged with murder be automatically tried in adult court; that, if convicted, they be sentenced as adults; and that their identity not be hidden from the public.

ASSISTED SUICIDE

Mr. Tom Wappel (Scarborough West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my final petition is signed by people from all across Canada but primarily from British Columbia.

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

* * *

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

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

The Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

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[*English*]

BRITISH COLUMBIA TREATY COMMISSION ACT

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-107, an act respecting the establishment of the British Columbia Treaty Commission, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

The Speaker: The member for Edmonton East has the floor and has 17 minutes left.

Ms. Judy Bethel (Edmonton East, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rose today in support of Bill C-107 respecting the British Columbia Treaty Commission and the process that has been developed in treaty making in British Columbia which included, specifically, third party consultations.

(1520)

The process aspect of treaty negotiations has received considerable attention from TNAC members. Their demands for a more open negotiation process and less stringent confidentiality requirements have really stimulated media interest and some public criticism. The government has responded by removing TNAC confidentiality requirements. This has improved the members' capacity to consult with and to represent their organizations more effectively.

The provincial minister of aboriginal affairs, the hon. John Cashore, attends most of TNAC meetings and the federal minister has met with TNAC on four occasions including most meetings held so far in 1995. The member of Parliament for Vancouver East has agreed to be the personal representative of the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development to TNAC. However I will take this opportunity to introduce members of the House to some of the people participating in the treaty negotiation advisory committee and to the TNAC group.

The key treaty negotiation advisory committee member is Michael Hunter. He is a representative of the Fisheries Council of B.C. He has significant government experience as part of the federal team that negotiated the 1985 Canada-U.S. Pacific Salmon Treaty. He is a former employee of the Department of Fisheries and Oceans and has been on the fisheries council for about nine years. He has served on numerous fisheries advisory committees as well as on international trade consultations. His organization, made up of the major fish processing companies, is most concerned with ensuring that claims settlements do not create more problems for the B.C. commercial fishing industry.

Paddy Greene is a lifelong commercial salmon fisherman from Prince Rupert. Mr. Greene has also been actively involved in the advisory processes of the DFO on fish allocation and fisheries management. He has served as commissioner on the Canada-U.S. Pacific Salmon Commission and was recently manager of the Prince Rupert Fishermen's Co-op. He sits as the northern representative on TNAC and chairs the fisheries committee. He has been most concerned about the implementation of the DFO's aboriginal fisheries strategy and legal sale of aboriginal fish food.

Dennis Brown is a representative of the United Fishermen and Allied Workers' Union. Mr. Brown has risen through the ranks of the union, serving in various capacities including Fraser River organizer before becoming an executive member. He has worked effectively on easing tensions between commercial fishermen and recent Vietnamese entrants. The UFAWU includes both harvesters and plant workers, many of whom are native people. The union is most concerned about job losses in an already downsized industry. He will point to the many aboriginal plant workers and commercial harvesters as examples of how to create and maintain job opportunities for natives.

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Guy Rose is a representative of the British Columbia Cattle-men's Association. Mr. Rose's family has been in the business for three generations. Usually soft spoken, he is concerned by the apparent lack of understanding some politicians have displayed concerning the impact of claims policies on third parties. He perceives that the general population is concerned by the generous benefits that may be provided. His group's main concern, however, will be continued access to provincial crown land at reasonable cost for grazing needs.

Susan Anderson, although designated as the alternate for the B.C. Federation of Labour, has attended almost all committee meetings on behalf of the president, Mr. Ken Georgetti of the B.C. Federation of Labour, and is a historic supporter of native rights. Ms. Anderson has referred frequently to the need for better compensation and adjustment programs for those industries and workers affected by claims agreements.

Bill Wimpney is a representative of the B.C. Wildlife Federation and is outspoken and direct. He is usually constructive and well prepared. He is continually mindful of the BCWF members' interests. He also chairs the wildlife sectoral advisory committee. The BCWF represents about 40,000 anglers, hunters and outdoor admirers throughout B.C. Mr. Wimpney has worked on preparing a statement on his organization's position on native issues and some bottom lines his members expect in negotiations. These relate specifically to access, endangered species protection and jurisdiction.

Marlie Beets is the vice-president of aboriginal affairs with the Council of Forest Industries and the former alternate for the Cariboo Lumber Manufacturers' Association. She is from Williams Lake and has been associated with the forestry industry for many years. COFI is most concerned about the further loss of harvestable timber resources and has indicated that minimum land transfers balanced with a larger cash component would be preferable.

(1525)

Lloyd Whyte represents the interior forest industry coalition, an umbrella group for the three interior forestry organizations. He has been concerned about the cost sharing formula between Canada and B.C. and believes it will provide more land to native people in the interior than on the coast. He also chairs the lands and forest committee on which he sits as representative for the Cariboo Lumber Manufacturers' Association.

Ken Sumanik is the representative of the Mining Association of B.C. He was the chair of the energy, mines and petroleum resources committee. His organization represents large mining and exploration operators in B.C. They have indicated they are facing serious economic difficulties due to commodity prices and environmental standards. The industry is most concerned that claim settlements not impede its ability to explore efficiently developed mineral deposits. It is not so much concerned about

to whom royalties are paid as long as the opportunity remains to explore and develop B.C.'s mineral and petroleum resources.

Jerry Lampert is president of the B.C. Business Council. He recently stepped down as the organization's designated representative but usually attends agenda items involving the ministers. He was appointed by the B.C. Business Council when the respected James Matkin stepped down. Representing a large, diverse group of major private sector corporations, the business council acts mainly as a group to lobby governments. It will be most concerned with ensuring ministerial participation in TNAC meetings as the best means of ensuring its views are heard by the decision makers. The council also seeks to minimize the impact of settlements on B.C. employers by ensuring that the cost of treaty settlements does not add to the tax burden of businesses.

Dick McMaster is the representative of the Fishing Resort Operators Association and the Council of Tourist Associations. Mr. McMaster speaks for a growing sector in the B.C. economy. Many of the areas seen as ideal for tourism and recreation are also priority areas for many claimant groups. Tourism and sport fishing operators will seek to ensure their continued access to and use of those areas. This includes freshwater fishing and wilderness enjoyment. Mr. McMaster has been an active member of the committee and frequently participates in committee discussions.

At a March 1994 meeting he stated:

The more economic effort natives are involved in now, the less there will be the pressure for more land and cash when treaties are settled.

Although Richard Taylor is an alderman for the Union of British Columbia Municipalities he chairs the governance sectoral advisory committee. He chaired the early negotiations with the government to establish and define a joint third party consultation process. He has promoted the UBCM position on the need for local governments to be represented or present at the treaty negotiation table.

These are very respected British Columbians. The Government of Canada appreciates the time they have taken from their very busy schedules to participate in this very meaningful and important consultation process.

The job before these people is a great one. They carry the responsibility of representing vast interests of B.C.'s economy. They are building economic well-being not only for the immediate generation but for generations to come. They carry the responsibility of representing the vast interests of B.C.'s industry. TNAC is an integral part of the process. TNAC will develop positive, realistic and fair recommendations to enhance the negotiations.

The long term success of the process lies with the partners of the process. We need to encourage and congratulate all those who will participate.

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Mr. Dennis J. Mills (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I listened to my colleague from Edmonton East I could not help but get a sense of one reason the bill was going through the House so quickly and with so much co-operation. Obviously it is because of the tremendous team that has been put in place and the co-operation the team is bringing to the table not only in the sectors of tourism, mining, forestry, et cetera, but in all levels of government.

(1530)

My community, which is downtown Toronto, is going through a very difficult time. The brotherhood of carpenters and joiners, the drywall lathing and installation workers, a very large union of about 2,800 members, has been on strike on and off since June and has voted recently to go on strike. Less than 1,000 members decided this. At a time when our economy needs to be working at full throttle we have in Toronto a situation in which the leadership and the various principals cannot seem to co-operate. The people who are affected by this, the thousands, are suffering.

Yet here in western Canada we see a beautiful example of all levels of government coming together. All the principal stakeholders and all the various sectors of the economy have come together. We see that a piece of legislation goes through the House in no time flat. The community in western Canada and ultimately all Canadians will be the beneficiaries.

I appeal to the leadership of that very strong union in my city to use this example in British Columbia as a possible model on how to get all of those people back to work in Toronto.

Hon. Ethel Blondin-Andrew (Secretary of State (Training and Youth), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to participate in the debate on second reading of Bill C-107 regarding the establishment of the British Columbia Treaty Commission.

The negotiation of treaties offers Canadians a chance to look at the issue not only from a historical perspective but also from a modern reality. The tabling of this legislation on the British Columbia Treaty Commission gives us an opportunity to discuss the implications and the importance of treaty negotiations in B.C.

Members from British Columbia, including my hon. colleague, the Minister of National Revenue, understand only too well the importance of these negotiations. The history of British Columbia and the various interests speak for a process, in a sense beg for a process such as this.

This legislation reflects not only how current treaty negotiations are done but how critical they are. The situation we have today regarding negotiations is much different than when the numbered treaties on the prairies were settled. It bears discussion on the kind of relationship aboriginal people across the country have with their treaties.

I stand in the House of Commons as a representative of the Government of Canada and as an elected member for my constituents. I stand here also as someone whose whole life has essentially evolved around the whole issue of treaties in terms of the kinds of inalienable rights that aboriginal people have discussed, debated and put on their priority list throughout the years of discussing the Constitution and land settlements. The treaties have always arisen as a major priority.

If people have a sense of passion, a sense of direction and vision about their interpretation of the treaties, it comes from the fact that it is a much analysed subject but also very personal. My grandfather who is a chief, Zaul Blondin, was a signatory to Treaty 11. In that signatory I see many things not just for me but for the future of my people. In relation to British Columbia I can see the same kind of intent, the same kind of compassion, passion, dedication and determination about the process when it relates to not just one group but all of the groups. My frame of reference is from my experience. My experience is from the perspective of the First Nations.

(1535)

I know the numbered treaties for the First Nations I referred to in my area, 8 and 11 in the Northwest Territories, set a very interesting perspective for the future of a people; the Dene people guided by these two treaties, the language itself, the immense vision by the people who signed those treaties, the people who had the vision. It was not colloquial. It was not parochial. It was not odd and simple. It was very visionary.

This language, as long as the grass grows, as long as the sun shines, as long as the rivers flow and as long as this land shall last, are not just words. They have given the opportunity for aboriginal young people to have post-secondary education. They have given the opportunity for people of aboriginal descent, no matter where they live and who are treaty, to have accorded to them the appropriate health programs and services to deal with taxation issues, health issues, hunting and fishing rights and related issues and issues still debated like housing. Those issues are being constantly debated.

The numbered treaties in the prairies were signed in advance of settlement. The government of the day sought to ensure that certainty and title were confirmed before Europeans settled in what are now Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta. Although certainty was the intention, the issue is yet much debated, the treaty is much debated, and most of the results are as of yet lacking definition or implementation and are not at all conclusive. That also begs for a process and hence we have the British Columbia one.

There needs to be certainty. There needs to be very clearly spelled out the future for aboriginal people. I have a document called "Sovereign Injustice—the Forcible Inclusion of the James Bay Crees and Cree Territory into a Sovereign Quebec". On page 5 it talks about the unilateral alteration of aboriginal treaties:

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Existing land claims treaties provide for a permanent federalist arrangement and include federal and Quebec governments (as well as aboriginal peoples) as parties. How can the PQ government claim it would be legal or legitimate for a secessionist Quebec to unilaterally alter existing treaties with aboriginal peoples in Quebec? On what basis could Quebec claim it can simply take over existing federal treaty obligations and unilaterally determine that the Canadian government would no longer be a party to the treaties concerned?

That question has a lot to do with certainty. Aboriginal people feel this is their homeland. They have an inalienable right, as my colleague from Churchill indicated earlier on in debate, that aboriginal people feel they have an inalienable right to this country. They cannot be separated from this country because it was the creator who put them here. They did not come from somewhere else.

Treaties have a number of interpretations, some very spiritual. It is not only legal analysis, it is also a spiritual commitment, a spiritual determination that the aboriginal people have that relationship with treaties.

In British Columbia the situation was much different. Certainty over the land question was never resolved prior to settlement. As a result we are now dealing with a situation that presents challenges that did not exist at the time the early treaties were concluded. Much development has occurred in British Columbia. There has not always been that attempt for partnership.

In Canada and in the world there are no entities unto themselves that feel they can exist without partnership.

(1540)

Aboriginal communities understand with good measure what there is to be gained from those partnerships and of working together with other groups which is happening across the country, including in British Columbia, in the Queen Charlotte Islands. In the Haida Gwaii we have the first ever bicultural model, a Haida Gwaii trust. This is a trust fund between non-aboriginal and aboriginal people that resulted from an arrangement that came about with the federal government, the provinces, industry, as well as the aboriginal peoples themselves.

These things can happen but they are not easy. No one will tell anyone familiar with the negotiation process that it is simple or easy. It is not. However it is necessary. It is necessary to go through rough waters. It is necessary to have a dialogue that is challenging.

One of these challenges is the need for the government to represent third party and public interest at the treaty table. Let me put it this way. Those third party interests in terms of the treaty negotiation advisory committee are well represented. The

list was read previously by the member for Edmonton East. It explained there is representation and fairness there. There is nothing secretive or conspiratorial. It is an open process and very transparent.

Canada recognizes the need to consult with third parties and to provide information to the public if treaties are to be lasting and beneficial for all Canadians. Some of my colleagues and I have spoken on a number of occasions about the importance of an open treaty negotiation process. How can we best as a government address the challenges in the areas of taxation, health, education, justice, policing, hunting and fishing rights, to name a few, in a global sense without a proper process?

This year this negotiation process will lend to and aid this whole situation. Nevertheless, many people continue to falsely believe the treaty process in British Columbia is secretive, conspiratorial, that the whole truth is not being told and that a special deal is being made. This is not the case. This belief has been fostered by a lack of awareness, understanding, compassion and sensitivity. If those people were as informed as they should be this would not be the case.

Information is a great enlightener. It pays to read and it pays to go to the source to negotiate to be with those people. Go to the source and meet with those people. That is what this country is all about.

The negotiation of treaty under the auspices of the British Columbia Treaty Commission process is not one based on backroom deals or secrets. The treaty process has never been as open and as transparent as it is in British Columbia today.

In B.C. we have set in place a province-wide treaty negotiation advisory committee made up of 31 organizations representing major economic sectors in that province. There was a time when this group operated under confidentiality rules. This is not uncommon. It happens when people are dealing with issues they feel deserve that kind of arrangement.

Today, however, when providing advice to the government on treaties being negotiated under the B.C. Treaty Commission an openness protocol is at work. Many of the recent TNAC sessions have had and will likely continue to have media present. How much more open can it be?

On local and regional levels negotiators meet regularly with regional and local advisory committees to discuss the topics being addressed at the treaty table. Of course this is part of the consultation process and allows public and third party interests direct access to the negotiators. That accessibility is one way of demonstrating to people that there is not any kind of conspiracy or a cover-up. It is a partnership.

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As far as actual treaty table talks, one of the items to be initially discussed during the readiness stage is the procedural document referred to as the openness protocol.

(1545)

These openness protocols have been agreed upon by the three parties at the table, the federal and provincial governments and the First Nations. Many of the treaty table members of the public and third party advisory committees can, if they so desire, attend and observe main table negotiation sessions. So it is open and people are welcome to attend.

I know of one instance, the Sechelt treaty negotiations, where negotiation sessions are videotaped and replayed on the local cable station. I cannot imagine a more open process than that. I was in Sechelt in my previous incarnation, if I might, as the critic for the aboriginal portfolio for the Liberal Party. Their process on self-government, which is renowned throughout Canada and the world, has also been very open. The Sechelt people do not have anything to hide. They have a lot to be proud of and a lot to share, and they do.

I assure members the public has not been shut out of the process; rather, it has been invited in and encouraged to attend. We are well aware the treaty process cannot happen in a vacuum. The public and third parties need to know about and be involved in the process. We encourage their input and involvement.

This is a fairer process, much more acceptable than the kind of imposing process previously engaged in. Now it tends to be more of a partnership, one of equality. Maybe that is what is so objectionable to some.

There are many threads the negotiation teams need to weave together for the modern treaty process to work, including representing the Canadian public and federal government at the treaty table, balancing effective negotiations with openness, ensuring the consultation process is an accountable one, and providing the public and media with timely information. Under the B.C. Treaty Commission process all of these threads are coming together. We are only at the beginning of the process, but we are moving toward strengthening the social, economic, and legal fabric of British Columbia with regard to land claims.

In Canada the treaty process has a past that forms an integral part of our history. It has a present. Many of us here in the House of Commons have seen the passage of modern treaties, as in the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement and the Inuvialuit Final Agreement. It has a future through the passage of legislation establishing the B.C. Treaty Commission and the negotiation and settlement of treaties under its auspices. That is why I am here today, to help usher in Bill C-107 and to ensure the job of treaty negotiations can continue in the province of B.C. so these negotiations can ultimately reach a successful conclusion.

Treaty making is a world known process. Treaty making is done between nations. Treaty making is done between various groups. It is an honourable process. It is not a process that begs criticism or any kind of misunderstanding. It is an honourable process. It is a process that will allow partnerships to develop. It is generally a process of honour that when you have made a treaty it will help to deal with some of the tougher questions governments have to deal with. It solidifies for governments, for communities, for peoples the programs and services. The arrangements that are made become clearer. They should, anyway.

In the myriad of claims and the whole conglomeration of land questions regarding title in British Columbia, with the whole issue of hunting and fishing, fishing rights and the Sparrow case, let us hope this process will lend some clarity, some definition, some partnership that will allow these groups to come to some conclusion and reach some of the results that have long been sought after and long wanted.

Ms. Margaret Bridgman (Surrey North, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I believe I have two questions for the hon. member. One is in relation to the time element here.

(1550)

We know this process has been going on for a considerable amount of time. The only reference I noted concerning time, which I believe was in the agreement of September 22, which this bill is based on, was in relation to funding, where it said "the first five years". Does the hon. member foresee this as a long, ongoing process again, or do we have a five-year or ten-year objective here?

My second question relates to the bill. I think clause 3 says the commission will assess the readiness of the principals to participate in the negotiations. What kind of authority does the word assessment mean? Does it mean it will assess and advise the principals that they are ready or not ready, or that it will assess and tell the principals that they can or cannot negotiate?

Ms. Blondin-Andrew: Mr. Speaker, on the whole issue of time, the only answer I can give is what has been prescribed in the working documents of the bill. I believe the member mentioned five years. For instance, Treaty 11 goes back to 1921.

Each treaty has a life of its own. We should say that the B.C. Treaty Commission has been set up to facilitate the negotiation of modern treaties in B.C. Once the process is completed the B.C. Treaty Commission will no longer be required. The B.C. Treaty Commission agreement states that the principals, Canada, B.C., and First Nations Summit, "shall terminate the BCT upon completion of their duties under their agreement or where BCT is no longer performing its duties". It is based on whether it is able to complete its work or not. Once its mission is completed, then as a mechanism the commission will essentially be disbanded.

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The member talked about the authority. I do not have the answer to that. I can take it under advisement. I am sure the appropriate departmental officials are watching and will be able to get back to the member with an answer.

Hon. David Anderson (Minister of National Revenue, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to speak in this debate on Bill C-107, following the member for Western Arctic. She has referred to her grandfather, a signer of Treaty 11 in the early 1920s, and talked of the passion, vision, and wisdom of the men who signed that treaty. I can tell the House and those watching the debate today that those qualities are very much in evidence in the granddaughter, in our hon. friend the member for Western Arctic. I would like to pay tribute to her as my colleague in the House, in caucus, and in cabinet for the qualities she brings to issues such as this. She contributes so much to assist us in our deliberations. It is indeed a pleasure to speak following her in the debate.

The events this summer in British Columbia and in Ontario have made all members of the House painfully aware of the tension in native communities across Canada. This is the result of years of injustice and poverty. This government is resolved to overcome these problems through the new partnership it envisages with Canada's First Nations. One of the first and most important unresolved problems in this relationship and in creating a better relationship between aboriginal peoples and other Canadians is the question of treaties in my home province of British Columbia.

I remind the House that British Columbia is unique in Canada, in that the process of signing treaties has never been completed. Only a handful of treaties were signed in the pre-Confederation period. These include the Douglas treaties of southern Vancouver Island, the area that includes my riding of Victoria, which indeed were signed by Governor Douglas with the First Nations of the area in a very farsighted move. In 1899 Treaty No. 8 was signed with the First Nations of the Peace River area in north-eastern B.C. Generally speaking, British Columbia is without a treaty system. In the rest of British Columbia the issue of aboriginal rights remains largely unresolved due to hundreds of years of neglect by successive colonial, federal, and in particular provincial governments.

(1555)

The First Nations have wanted to resolve these problems. Repeatedly they have pressed for treaties, but only in this decade did the provincial government have the willingness to negotiate with them and with Ottawa. Previously it maintained that there was no need to negotiate and it said that whatever rights to land and resources the aboriginal people may once have had were extinguished long ago. The result was decades of legal acrimony as the First Nations sought settlement through the

courts of what they were unable to achieve through the negotiations process.

I would like to mention in particular one case of great importance. In 1973, more than 20 years ago, the Supreme Court of Canada was asked in the famous Calder case whether aboriginal title to the Nisga'a traditional territory had been extinguished. Chief Frank Calder, with whom I had the privilege of sitting in the British Columbia legislature and who is now a constituent, a friend and adviser of mine, led the way in achieving recognition of aboriginal land title. In that case all six justices accepted that aboriginal title had existed in the past. Three ruled that it had been extinguished, but three ruled that it was unextinguished and that the government was obliged to negotiate treaties.

Since then the federal government has accepted the need to negotiate treaties in British Columbia. We have been negotiating with the Nisga'a people for these last 20 years, but resolution of the negotiations was next to impossible without provincial participation because of their responsibility under our Constitution for crown lands. That changed in 1990 when Jack Weisgerber, who was then the minister for aboriginal affairs in the province of British Columbia, announced that the province of British Columbia was willing to drop its traditional opposition to tripartite negotiations. It was this announcement of Mr. Weisgerber, who is now the leader of the B.C. Reform Party, that paved the way for the B.C. Treaty Commission.

I would like also to pay tribute to Mr. Weisgerber's premier at the time, Mr. Vander Zalm, who was responsible for this major breakthrough in the attitude of the British Columbia government toward the question of negotiation with First Nations people.

Today Mr. Weisgerber is leader of the provincial Reform Party and apparently is an opponent of this negotiating process, like his federal Reform brethren. I find it sad and ironic that Mr. Weisgerber, who should be proud of his role in the historic process of resolving this longstanding injustice, is now renouncing what is in my mind the finest moment of his political career.

I would ask the federal Reform Party to support the old Jack Weisgerber, the old Social Credit Jack Weisgerber, who was willing to help break a 120-year of pattern of injustice, and not the new Reform Jack Weisgerber, who wants to continue with the 19th century attitudes into the 21st century.

Many critics of this process, including many in this House, have emphasized the high costs of settling land claims. Indeed, there will be costs. I look at the *Sun* newspaper of Thursday, October 19, where the title on the city and region section says "\$10 billion figure baffles Ottawa". There is cost to settling land claims. When we are trying to settle issues that should have been resolved over a century ago, there will be a cost, a cost for long delay as well as the cost of the settlement itself. But there

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are also steep costs if we keep putting negotiations off and if we keep putting them off any further than now.

For example, in 1991 a Price Waterhouse study indicated that every year land claims go unsettled in British Columbia the province suffers the following consequences. \$1 billion in potential investment in forestry, mining and other resource sectors is lost. Second, 300 jobs which would otherwise be created are not created. Third, 1,500 jobs are adversely affected. Fourth, \$125 million in capital investment is lost or deferred.

(1600)

That is the price of inaction as outlined by the Price Waterhouse study. It is the price the critics of the process would have us continue to pay year after year until eventually it would be the courts which would force governments to pay billions more than they would have to pay if we settled these negotiations and these matters through fair, open negotiations with the First Nations people.

To help achieve this goal the B.C. Treaty Commission was established. It consists of five commissioners, five outstanding British Columbians, who represent the interests of all the parties to the negotiations. Two of the commissioners are nominated by the First Nations Summit, one by the provincial government and one by the federal government. The chief commissioner is duly selected and appointed by all three of the principals, namely the First Nations leadership, the federal and provincial governments.

The First Nations Summit includes all the First Nations in B.C. which have agreed to participate in the B.C. Treaty Commission's six-stage treaty negotiating process. The summit provides a forum for First Nations involved in the treaty process to meet and discuss negotiations. As one of the principals of the process it continues to provide direction along with the governments of B.C. and Canada.

Carole Corcoran was elected by the First Nations Summit as one of its first treaty commissioners. She also sat on the royal commission on Canada's future from 1990 to 1991. She serves on the board of governors of the University of Northern British Columbia. Unfortunately she had to resign recently.

On October 4 the First Nations selected Miles Richardson of Haida Gwaii as the second First Nations treaty commissioner. Mr. Richardson was a member of the B.C. claims task force which reported to the governments of B.C. and Canada and the First Nations on how the parties could begin negotiations to

build a new relationship. Mr. Richardson's appointment is pending order in council approval at this time.

The First Nations Summit has also elected as one of its commissioners Wilf Adam of the Lake Babine Indian Band. Mr. Adam, a former chief councillor of the band, is chairman of the Burns Lake Native Development Corporation and is co-founder of the Burns Lake law centre.

The British Columbia appointee is Barbara Fisher, formerly general counsel and Vancouver director of the Office of the Ombudsman. She currently practises part time as counsel to the B.C. Information and Privacy Commission.

Since last April the Government of Canada's representative on the commission has been Peter Lusztig, a professor of finance at the University of British Columbia. He also brings considerable breadth of experience from the community, having sat on B.C.'s royal commission on automobile insurance and the B.C. commission of inquiry into the tree fruit industry. In 1991 he also chaired the Asia-Pacific initiative advisory committee which was struck by the federal and provincial governments.

Since last May the chief commissioner, the fifth commissioner, has been Alec Robertson, Q.C. The legal community is familiar with his past work as president of the B.C. branch of the Canadian Bar Association, as chairman of the Law Foundation of British Columbia and as a member of the gender equality task force of the Canadian Bar Association.

I have given some details of these individuals to show all members of the House that the B.C. Treaty Commission consists of five distinguished Canadians who are doing their utmost to ensure that the comprehensive claims process moves along in a timely and orderly manner.

It was mentioned earlier that one area where much progress has been made is with respect to consultation with the citizens of British Columbia and the rest of the country. That is of course consultation outside of the responsibilities of the First Nations and the two governments.

(1605)

One of the recommendations contained in the commission's annual report which was tabled in the House last week is: "Canada and British Columbia make full use of their consultative processes so that the community at large will be confident that their voices are heard and their concerns are considered". This government strongly supports that recommendation. An effective dialogue, an effective exchange of accurate information is absolutely essential to concluding sound and sustainable treaties in British Columbia.

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Governments are using a number of consultative mechanisms to ensure that third parties affected by the treaty process voice their perspectives, their concerns, their interests, their ideas. We heard from one of the previous speakers on the government side, the hon. member for Edmonton West, how the treaty negotiations advisory committee provides advice to both governments on sectoral issues on a province-wide basis. To ensure that the interests of regional parties are being addressed, the negotiating teams work with local sectoral groups to form regional advisory committees, RACs as they are called.

There is an overall umbrella of 31 organizations to which the member made reference which cover the general interests of people in the province. In addition, there are the local bodies or the regional advisory committees. They are formed in areas where negotiations are beginning. They include representatives from the local non-aboriginal governments as well as from a variety of sectors such as industry, business, social services, resources and environment.

The establishment of a regional advisory committee is one of the conditions for the British Columbia Treaty Commission declaring a negotiating table ready for negotiations to commence. Eight regional advisory committees have been established in communities across British Columbia so far.

The lower mainland regional advisory committee, which meets in Vancouver, provides advice to the provincial and federal teams that are or will be negotiating with the Burrard, the Katzie, the Musqueam, the Squamish and the Tsawwassen. Issues which are of concern to this regional advisory committee include the use of federal crown lands, treaty settlements, Stanley Park, taxation and provision of services to the aboriginal community.

The Bulkley-Skeena regional advisory committee located in Smithers provides advice on negotiations with the Gitksan, Wet'suwet'en and the Gitanyow. Their concerns centre on the use of lands and resources, particularly forest and fish. Governance is also an important component.

On my own Vancouver Island there are two regional advisory committees. The west island RAC in Port Alberni is working with the negotiators for the Ditidaht First Nation and the Nuu-Chah-Nulth tribal council to ensure that the interests of local communities are addressed. Issues such as interim measures, fishing, forestry and environmental concerns are being addressed.

The south island RAC covers Victoria and extends north to Nanaimo. There are currently two First Nations in the first phases of the negotiation process, the Temexw and the Nanaimo. As other First Nations enter the treaty process, this regional advisory committee will be expanded to include representatives from additional interest groups.

There are others. There are a total of eight in other parts of the province. I will not go into each one in turn but to say that the overall system of regional advisory committees is well in place. It is working well and all local interests in those areas are involved in the negotiation process.

The regional advisory committee sets its own terms of reference including the meeting times, locations, subjects for discussion, openness of meetings and membership. The regional advisory committees are becoming more active in areas where the parties are moving into framework negotiations.

Despite the regional advisory committees and despite the umbrella organization discussed by my colleague, there have been public criticisms of the consultative process. Concerns have been raised that the interests of non-aboriginal people were not being properly represented at the negotiating table. As has been indicated by my colleague from the Western Arctic, this is incorrect. In order to dispel many of these concerns, federal and provincial representatives have made significant efforts to convey information about the treaty process. Local community officials are contacted for input on appropriate representative organizations for inclusion on any RAC being formed in their area.

(1610)

The treaty commission process ensures that both the federal and provincial governments are responsible for representing the non-aboriginal interests at the table. It is the role of both governments to listen to all these other interests, to consider their positions and their views and to develop a balanced negotiating strategy that fairly represents the interests of the communities involved, as well as of course the interests of the province as a whole and the country as a whole.

This government recognizes that the treaty process is important to everyone and will affect not only aboriginal people. A consultation process that works effectively is critical to the success of the treaty making process. The federal government is committed to consulting non-aboriginal people and third parties throughout the negotiating process.

Third party interests have been active in British Columbia throughout the treaty negotiations to date. They will continue to play an important role as these negotiations progress. The challenge before us is to ensure that we continue to develop a new relationship that encourages open dialogue and permits us to carefully consider all available options.

It was a pleasure to rise today to speak in favour of Bill C-107.

Ms. Margaret Bridgman (Surrey North, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I have one question of the hon. member which relates to the five commissioners.

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I realize the act states in the beginning that it is the chief commissioner plus four and there is quite a good dissertation on how the four are selected, including the chief. I do not quite understand how this fifth one came to be. In that relationship also in the term of office, I understand the chief commissioner is a three-year term of appointment and the others are for two-year terms. Does the hon. member know if there is any number of reappointments or consecutive terms, that type of thing?

Mr. Anderson: Mr. Speaker, yes the fifth commissioner who is of course the chair of the representatives, is chosen through consultation among the two governments and the First Nations who are part of the treaty process. It is done essentially by a consultative process and agreement in principle on an individual.

That was the case with Chuck Connaghan who served as the first chief commissioner and who set up the process. It was also the case for Alec Robertson who is currently the chief commissioner.

With reference to the period of time, I understand the member is correct. There is a set period of two years but reappointment is quite in order. If any of the organizations, be it either of the governments or the First Nations people, wish to reappoint one of their appointees, that is perfectly in order and would happen. It is also true that the chief commissioner can be reappointed, although I have to say that is my understanding rather than my firm knowledge. I will get absolutely accurate information for the hon. member.

It is important to make sure that in such an organization with five people in it we do not come to the end of the period of appointment and then start afresh with new commissioners. As the hon. member quite correctly pointed out in her question to the hon. member for Western Arctic, this is a difficult issue with respect to time. A continuity of personnel will be most important in making sure that we do not slide backward at any point in the process. I will get the actual terms dealing with the period of appointment for the hon. member.

(1615)

Mr. Morris Bodnar (Saskatoon—Dundurn, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to speak in support of Bill C-107 today.

In 1990 Price Waterhouse estimated, as the hon. member who just spoke indicated, that about \$1 billion of expenditures involving up to 1,500 jobs in the mining and forestry sector were likely to be affected if claims were not resolved. When we hear these numbers we must keep in mind that these are only two industry sectors and this study was over five years ago. In that report Price Waterhouse indicated that comprehensive land claims generate uncertainty for companies operating in British Columbia. I will get back to the factor of uncertainty.

Factors creating uncertainty include right of access to land and resources, possibility of production or shipment disruptions affecting reliability as suppliers, and possibility of unsatisfactory compensation if a company is affected by a land claim settlement.

Forestry and mining companies reported that they required a premium to invest in British Columbia rather than elsewhere because of the uncertainties related to comprehensive claims. Currently the premium is generally less than 1 per cent but it is expected to rise in the future. As indicated, the economic impact on the province of British Columbia is substantial.

The report goes on to indicate that uncertainty surrounding settlement of the land claims issue will ultimately have an impact on the provincial economy. It is estimated that almost \$1 billion of currently proposed mining and forestry industry investments could be affected by the non-settlement of comprehensive land claims, although land claims are generally not the only issue to be resolved before development can proceed.

The economic impacts of such delays or cancellations could be summarized as follows: \$50 million of capital expenditures could be lost each year; \$75 million of capital expenditures could be delayed resulting in both lost opportunities and continued operation of less than efficient plants; and some 100 jobs stand not to be created each year because of the economic uncertainty. Such loss of growth of primary industry jobs means that the service sector will also be impacted and grow more slowly. Using generally accepted employment multipliers this is equivalent to a further 200 jobs not created throughout the province each year which might otherwise materialize.

The report indicates based on the projects identified in the survey that ultimately some 1,500 permanent jobs could be impacted, together with related indirect and induced employment.

It is important to refer to particular parts of the report because of the details contained therein. It is important to look at different aspects. There is reference made to the mining industry. The situation is a bit different at the mining development stage. A number of the participants indicated that they expected difficulties from unsettled land claims. Together the projects the participants indicated they had problems with represent about \$680 million in capital expenditures.

Extrapolating the results and analysing expected impacts, Price Waterhouse estimated that the mining investment of about \$100 million a year was likely to be affected by uncertainties related to comprehensive land claims in British Columbia. This represents about 12 per cent of annual private and public capital investment in the British Columbia mining industry. Based on the survey results about half the projects affected were expected to experience delays of about three years. The other half were expected to be cancelled.

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(1620)

Along with these losses one has to look at another ancillary loss, legal costs. Comprehensive land claims in British Columbia result in legal costs to governments, companies and native organizations estimated by Price Waterhouse at about \$5 million a year.

In 1987, it is important to note, forestry, logging and wood products, manufacturing and pulp and paper manufacturing accounted for about 30 per cent of the GDP of the goods producing industries of the province of British Columbia and about 10 per cent of the province's GDP. In 1988 the industry was responsible for 87,000 direct permanent jobs representing about 6 per cent of total employment in British Columbia. The multiplier effect creates at least two more jobs for each direct job. Thus 261,000 jobs in British Columbia can be attributed to the forestry industry, 17 per cent of the total provincial workforce.

Mining, oil, gas and related manufacturing account for about 15 per cent of goods producing GDP and about 5 per cent of the provincial GDP. This is half the size of the forest industry in terms of GDP contribution.

We must note the Price Waterhouse study was completed over five years ago in March 1990. A lot has happened in the resource industry and on the land claims front since that time. However the one thing that has remained consistent is the need to establish certainty in the province of British Columbia through the negotiation and settlement of land claims.

The study conducted by Price Waterhouse involved leaders in the mining and forestry industries including senior executives, presidents and vice-presidents of companies, as well as general managers, chief foresters and managers of exploration and woodland operations. This is a critical point to understand the real impact of the lack of certainty on the land claims front to resource development and the impact the study has had in the industry. It signals the very broad recognition by industry from the boardrooms out to the field. The issue cannot be more emphatic. The settlement of land claims is long overdue.

Price Waterhouse reported that unresolved, comprehensive land claims generate uncertainty to companies operating in British Columbia, as I have already mentioned. I will mention it again to emphasize it for third party members and get through to them that it is an important factor.

Factors creating this uncertainty include the right of access to land and resources. For these companies the most important factors affecting the premium include future uncertainties regarding the outcome of injunctions related to land ownership or access, the possibility of production disruption, and future considerations regarding royalties and taxes.

The respondents to the Price Waterhouse survey generally agree that companies, employees and governments all pay the cost of uncertainty related to comprehensive land claims. The survey respondents also agreed that generally the higher cost could not be passed on to consumers because the resource sectors in British Columbia sell on world markets and are price takers. None of the respondents reported having considered compensation for comprehensive claims when applying for federal-provincial government funding. Very few respondents actually reported having applied for government incentive programs in the past.

(1625)

These are very real concerns in resource based sectors in the province of British Columbia that consequently the economic stability not only of that province but the rest of the country as well.

There has been considerable action on the claims front since the study was done. The province of British Columbia has entered into the negotiation process and over 47 nation groups in the province of British Columbia have submitted statements of intent to negotiate.

The federal government is committed to resolving the uncertainty issues caused by the lack of treaties in B.C. The tabling of legislation for the creation of the B.C. Treaty Commission is one step toward the resolution of uncertainty.

There is no doubt in anyone's mind that the Price Waterhouse numbers demonstrate a clear and resounding indication of the impacts and the costs associated with not resolving land claims in the province of British Columbia.

We know we are losing over \$1 billion in investment and over 1,500 jobs in mining and forestry. The door is open to resolve the land claims issue, to achieve certainty and to move forward. We must act. The opportunity is here today with the B.C. Treaty Commission legislation.

Mr. Darrel Stinson (Okanagan—Shuswap, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I listened to the hon. member's comments with regard to the issue.

A number of bands in B.C. have not agreed and have refused to sign on. They are actually arguing with other bands over who has what lands. Yet the member is saying to go ahead and spend the money with no commitment from the other bands. I do not understand this at all. It will be an ongoing argument between the bands and there will be no settlement.

He blames this for impeding industry. It will impede industry. I will not disagree with that. It will not impede industry as much as the government has since it was elected. The government's regulations have tied up mining far tighter than any land claim agreement. Even the mining and logging industries would agree with that.

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I fully understand that land tenure is a big problem in Canada. However that is into the area of provincial jurisdiction. They are trying to put the horse before the cart. It has already taken place without the legislation passing through Parliament and I do not understand that either. Maybe you can answer some of my questions.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): Before I give the floor to the hon. member for Saskatoon—Dundurn, I remind members to direct questions and comments through the Chair.

Mr. Bodnar: Mr. Speaker it is nice to know that members of the third party recognize that this uncertainty is having an impact on industry in Canada. Hopefully, rather than being critical of what is being proposed, the third party will propose whatever it believes may be better. If its proposals are better we can discuss them.

It is interesting to note the land claims, overlapping claims and the problems with them. Of course it is voluntary and entrance is voluntary. However it is hoped that as we proceed the parties and other groups in British Columbia will see the process is working. Since it is voluntary, hopefully other groups that are somewhat reluctant will join the program.

A step has to be taken. We cannot throw our arms in the air and say that we have this problem but will do nothing about it. We cannot say that. We have to try to bring the matter to a resolution and help industry and people in the province of British Columbia and elsewhere in Canada bring the matter to a head. I just wish the hon. member had some constructive suggestions on how this matter could be dealt with if he is not happy with the process we have introduced.

(1630)

Mrs. Beryl Gaffney (Nepean, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I too am very pleased to speak to Bill C-107. This is a very important bill and is long overdue. However the understanding should be that we are now at this stage and let us get on with it.

Today marks the culmination of a long and at times very difficult struggle. It is born of British Columbia's history and is the product of many years of hard work and a lot of acrimonious debate.

The issue of aboriginal rights in B.C. has remained unresolved for years. The negotiation process has gone on for decades. Many people have played a part. Many times the negotiators did not understand the cultural differences they were dealing with.

My comments this afternoon will be very short. I will address only what one company in British Columbia has done to improve cross-cultural awareness which not only improves relations but improves business for all concerned.

Aboriginal and non-aboriginal people often work in the same circles in both the private and public sectors, yet the level of awareness across cultures is often lower than it should be. Misinformation about the culture and beliefs of First Nations can create tension within an office and across the boardroom table. This tension negatively impacts on interpersonal and business relations.

One of the best ways to increase knowledge about First Nations is through cross-cultural awareness training. An example of this is what I am going to speak about today.

B.C. Hydro is a leader in this field. Once B.C. Hydro realized the benefits of working with aboriginal peoples it developed the aboriginal cross-cultural awareness training program to increase employee knowledge of First Nations culture. "Taking an interest in learning about First Nations issues was the first step in improving relationships between two cultures," says Patrick Kelly, training co-ordinator of B.C. Hydro.

The program has been so successful it is now offered to organizations outside B.C. The hydro program was developed in collaboration with aboriginal people and is delivered by First Nations people familiar with community, corporate and government operations.

The program has three levels. Participants start with an information session about First Nations history, culture and languages. An overview on relationship building and conducting business with aboriginal people is also presented. Participants then progress to the next level which provides in depth information about a specific aboriginal group relevant to the client. The client also has the opportunity to acquaint the aboriginal group with its structure and interest. The third level of the program includes a facilitated face to face meeting between the client and the aboriginal group.

To date B.C. Hydro has provided training for several organizations and businesses such as CN Rail, the Union of B.C. Municipalities, the Insurance Corporation of B.C., and the B.C. Lottery Corporation. Reaction to the program has been very positive. Two CN Rail employees who recently attended the session noted that the training will strengthen partnerships with First Nations and stimulate new ideas and strategies.

Cross-culture awareness training can assist any organization that deals with First Nations. Ian Tait, B.C. Hydro's manager of business development and communications says: "In light of the current treaty making process in B.C., it has become even more important for companies to build stronger relationships with First Nations". I am sure anyone who is wishing to have information on this could contact someone at B.C. Hydro with regard to its aboriginal cross-culture awareness training program.

I have recently been assigned to the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage. If ever we are to have an interest in the heritage of this country and who probably has the most to gain or to lose, we certainly have a lot to gain by knowing our aboriginal

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and our First Nations people and knowing more about their history and their culture. It is important that we understand what their culture is and try to work with it. If First Nations would understand our culture too, I believe that all in the community would be better served and business would be better served.

(1635)

My comments are very short. It is only to create awareness, which in turn will give better understanding, which will lead to a resolution and hopefully, passage of Bill C-107.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): I remind the House that we are presently at the last stage of debate on Bill C-107, in which members are entitled to a 10-minute maximum intervention without questions or comments.

Mr. John Murphy (Annapolis Valley—Hants, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak on Bill C-107. As a member of the Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, I know the importance of the bill. I will spend a few moments talking about the federal government's perspective on the B.C. treaty negotiations.

The federal government has a dual objective in entering into treaty negotiations: to achieve certainty as to the rights and obligations of all lands and resource users; and to establish a new relationship between First Nations and other citizens. It is important as Canada evolves to achieve a better relationship between our native people and the rest of Canadians.

The interests which Canada brings to the treaty negotiating table are outlined in the preliminary document dated June 27, 1995. This was prepared by the federal treaty negotiations office.

The Government of Canada has primary jurisdiction over issues such as financial benefits, governance and fisheries, while in other areas such as lands and wildlife it may exercise varying degrees of authority. Although the federal government does not have primary jurisdiction over all the topics which will be subject to negotiation, it has nevertheless declared its interest in every area. Overall, in concluding treaties in B.C., Canada's interest is ensuring that fairness, affordability, clarity and durability are present.

The federal government has also identified its specific interests in negotiating the key components of the treaty. Those key components are lands and resources, financial benefits and governance. Let me outline some of the key elements of each of these components.

In the area of lands and resources, we want to ensure the conservation of resources for the future use and benefit of all Canadians. We want to ensure that we promote and integrate a co-ordinated approach to land and resource management. We also want to identify and consult with all interested and affected third parties and deal with them equitably. We obviously have to

respect the legal rights of all of our citizens. The promotion of self-reliance of the First Nations is important and is one of the reasons I sit on the parliamentary committee. Last, with respect to lands and resources, we must safeguard Canada's over-arching obligations.

In the area of financial benefits, we want to ensure in concluding agreements that they are affordable for all Canadians. That is very important. I believe we can work together with all parties to make sure that happens. We also have to ensure that there is no burden to Canada's economy and taxpayers.

Most important, we must ensure there is fairness and equity among all the treaties concluded in B.C. and elsewhere in Canada. That is important for our government. We talked about that in our red book, that there be fairness and equity in all of our conclusions when we do these treaties. The last and most important one is promoting self-reliance in the First Nations communities.

(1640)

The main elements in the area of governance are establishing new relationships with First Nations. That is an important element for us. We are always striving to do that. I am watching this happen more and more in my committee. We are looking at it in a subcommittee on education of which I am also a member. We are looking at how those new relationships can be built so that First Nations can take their proper roles in the country.

We want to establish clear and harmonious jurisdictional arrangements among all levels of government. We also want to maintain Canada's over-arching sovereignty and the application of the charter of rights and freedoms.

We must make sure that First Nations institutions of government are democratic and accountable. This is coming more and more into play. Our native people want to be more democratic and accountable for their ongoing performance in Canada.

We want to recognize the unique needs of various First Nations. That is very important as well. There are so many unique needs of our First Nations people. Through this treaty and this commission those needs, unique as they are, can be highlighted and accentuated.

The means whereby Canada will achieve its interests will be determined through extensive consultations with third parties and ultimately through a process of negotiations with the First Nations and British Columbia.

What is the vision for post-treaty British Columbia? The federal government has a vision for British Columbia after treaty negotiations have concluded with the province's First Nations. Canada seeks a society in which new relationships are forged with First Nations, a relationship obviously based on respect and trust, one that reconciles modern Canadian realities with the traditional native aspirations.

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Although Canada has a vision of what it would like to see at the end of the day, there is no prescription to define this new relationship. It will be built on a process, that trust I talked about, the respect I talked about. That will be negotiated by the three parties: the First Nations, Canada and British Columbia.

The fundamental elements of Canada's vision for post-treaty B.C. include certainty, equity and finality, practical arrangements, and opportunities for economic development. That is very important because our First Nations are striving to build their communities. They are striving to be more independent, but that independence can only come if there is economic opportunity and development, if native people can forge their design and abilities around economic development and make their communities more productive. That would give the independence and self-reliance which is so important for our First Nations people.

We have to make sure that the vision is workable, efficient and cost effective with these governance arrangements. What we will see in this vision at the end of the day are healthier First Nations. Nobody wants that more than the First Nations people themselves.

Last, we want more harmonious relations and better neighbours. That goes without saying. I am very pleased to have had the opportunity to speak on Bill C-107 and, obviously, very pleased to support it.

(1645)

Mr. John Finlay (Oxford, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as a new member of the aboriginal affairs and northern development committee, I am pleased to rise and speak on Bill C-107, an act respecting the establishment of the British Columbia Treaty Commission.

The B.C. treaty commission will be charged with the task of facilitating treaty negotiations, including the implementation of the inherent right to self-government. The bill will help all of us to understand something of the complexity involved in this process and something of the patience that is required. It will also help us to understand what that elusive phrase "inherent right to self-government" means.

Self-government will be dealt with at the same treaty table as other items such as land and resources. The same principles and practices of openness which currently characterize the B.C. treaty making process will also apply to self-government negotiations.

The federal government will not establish additional processes. These negotiations will be with the aboriginal groups that are involved in the existing treaty process in B.C. As the act outlines, the current chief federal negotiators who work out of the federal treaty negotiation office will represent Canada in self-government negotiations.

The budgets allocated for the B.C. treaty making process and managed by the treaty commission will support self-government negotiations.

It is federal government policy to implement the inherent right of aboriginal people to self-government and it will focus on reaching practical and workable agreements on how self-government will be exercised. Rather than trying to define it in abstract terms or through lengthy and costly litigation, while there are different views about the nature, scope and content of the inherent right, negotiations among governments and aboriginal peoples are preferred over litigation. Consultation and co-operation, not confrontation.

It seems to be without cause for any contradiction that in our modern society, and perhaps because we tend to follow practices from south of the border, that we are becoming less and less able, sometimes in government and civic affairs and interpersonal relationships too, to sit down and solve some of these problems without the help of high priced lawyers and legal experts. We could give many examples of the increasing cost of this sort of thing. Many of us have had first hand experience of that. I applaud the thrust of this bill.

Given the different circumstances of aboriginal peoples, implementation of the inherent right cannot be uniform, nor will it result in a one size fits all form of self-government. There are 625 First Nations in Canada and I am sure we would find at least 450 different interpretations of what the inherent right means, depending on whether these are the Crees of northern Quebec or the members of Walpole Island or the Sechelt in B.C. Therefore there are 625 negotiations to be completed.

It would do us well to remember that for 200 years we have treated our aboriginal people in a paternalistic way. They see themselves as occupiers of this land before our ancestors arrived. They see themselves as people who agreed in a peaceful way to share that land with us. All too often our answer, when they were outnumbered, was to ignore them completely and push them on to the poorest land we could find and call it a reserve.

(1650)

Self-government arrangements will be tailored to meet the unique needs of aboriginal groups and will be responsive to their particular political, economic, legal, historical, cultural and social circumstances.

The inherent right of self-government immediately does not include a right of sovereignty in the international law sense and will not result in sovereign, independent aboriginal nation states. On the contrary, implementation of self-government should enhance the participation of aboriginal people in Canadian federation and ensure that aboriginal peoples and their governments do not exist in isolation, separate and apart from the rest of society.

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It is envisioned that these agreements about self-government will provide for the aboriginal First Nations a form of government somewhere between municipal government or provincial government where they will have self-government authority over the immediate day to day lives of their people and they will have a continuing relationship with the federal government.

Lest we feel that these things are all going to be done very quickly and expeditiously and that Bill C-107 suddenly outlines the path before us with sign posts that will be met one after the other, it might be wise to summarize some of the subject matter that will be open to negotiation in the first instance, in other words the scope of these negotiations.

They will involve the establishment of governing structures, internal constitutions, elections and leadership selection processes; membership; marriage; adoption and child welfare; aboriginal language, culture and religion; education; health; social services; administration and enforcement of aboriginal laws; policing; property rights; land management; natural resources management; agriculture; hunting, fishing and trapping on aboriginal lands; taxation in respect of direct taxes and property taxes of members; transfer and management of moneys and group assets; management of public works and infrastructure; housing; local transportation; licensing, regulation and operation of businesses located on aboriginal lands. Subject matters beyond those integral to aboriginal culture or strictly internal to an aboriginal group are open to negotiation.

In these instances, primary law making authority would remain with the federal or provincial governments as the case may be and would prevail in the event of a conflict with aboriginal laws.

These matters need to be understood and negotiated. They would include such things as divorce; labour and training; administration of justice issues, including matters related to the administration and enforcement of laws of other jurisdictions which might include certain criminal laws; penitentiaries and parole; environmental protection, assessment and pollution prevention; fisheries co-management; migratory birds co-management; gaming; and emergency preparedness.

The third heading is subject matters where it is essential for the federal government to retain its law making authority. These are grouped under two headings in the act: the powers related to Canadian sovereignty, defence and external relations, international diplomatic relations in foreign policy, national defence and security, security of national borders and international treaty making; immigration, naturalization and aliens; international trade, including tariffs and import-export controls.

(1655)

Other national interest powers involve the management and regulation of the national economy, the maintenance of national law and order, the protection of health and safety of all Canadians, federal undertakings and other powers including broadcasting and telecommunications, aeronautics, navigation and shipping, maintenance of national transportation systems, postal service, the census and statistics. While law making power in these areas will not be the subject of negotiations, the federal government is prepared to consider administrative arrangements where feasible and appropriate.

The policy principles on which self-government negotiations will be based are the following: the inherent right is an existing aboriginal right under the Canadian Constitution. Self-government will be exercised within the existing Canadian Constitution. It should enhance the participation of aboriginal peoples in Canadian society. The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms will apply fully to aboriginal governments as it does to other governments in Canada.

Due to federal fiscal constraints, all federal funding for self-government will be achieved through the reallocation of existing resources as outlined in the 1995 budget. Where all parties agree, rights in self-government agreements may be protected in new treaties under section 35 of the Constitution as additions to existing treaties or as part of comprehensive land claims agreements. Federal, provincial, territorial and aboriginal laws must work in harmony. Laws of overriding federal and provincial importance such as the Criminal Code will prevail and the interests of all Canadians will be taken into account as agreements are negotiated.

Members have spoken previously about respect and trust which are absolutely essential. Another essential element if Bill C-107 is going to fulfil its promise and if we are going to get land claims on the road to settlement will be patience.

Mr. Dennis J. Mills (Broadview—Greenwood, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to speak in support of Bill C-107, an act respecting the establishment of the British Columbia Treaty Commission.

It is important that we go back to the last Parliament when the Liberal members from eastern and western Arctic came to the House and made sure that parties on both sides of the House were fully acquainted with some of the difficulties, frustrations and road blocks that our First Nations have had over the years in trying to get some of these outstanding treaties resolved.

I can reflect back to our very first year as rookie members of Parliament. Mr. Speaker, I remember being with you and our caucus colleagues when we spent a long weekend in Iqaluit. We were all immersed in the community and the culture. Many of us

realized that old expression “out of sight, out of mind” reflected what has been going for many years with many of our First Nations communities.

As I mentioned, the members from the eastern and western Arctic urged us on and we as a caucus and now as a government are fully participating in ensuring the realization of some of those priorities which interest the First Nations are becoming legislation.

It is also a tribute to the government, specifically to the minister responsible for Indian and northern affairs. As one of our members mentioned earlier, some of these issues have been on the books for over 100 years. We just keep putting these treaties aside. The Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development probably had to twist some arms, because this has always been a tough issue to get on the front burner and get to the point where it becomes legislation on the floor of the House.

(1700)

Today we can celebrate. Maybe there are some members in the opposition who do not like the process that is evolving as we get the issue resolved, but I am happy to hear that in spirit they are essentially supportive of the legislation. I think that is fair ball. There is always room for improving the process in this place.

At times it strikes me as funny that the Reform Party tends to come from a background where they want less government, less red tape, and the activity around this particular bill has been that. A lot of entrepreneurial people from all levels of government and all sectors of the economy have worked together in a very constructive way. They have worked expeditiously, and now when they seem to be getting some real results the Reform Party is saying hold on a minute, we are getting a little head of ourselves; let us not be too efficient here, because we have to make sure that the MPs ratify this and place the seal of Parliament on it before we confirm or negotiate transactions.

The Reform Party should know that all of those discussions and activities and exploration that have taken place are really conditional upon the work in the House. The Reform Party should not get too upset about the process, as long as in the end we get this resolved. I think that is where we are all coming from.

I have worked over the last six years with my colleague from the Western Arctic, who has made me as a city member of Parliament much more aware of some of the difficulties some of our first peoples are having trying to get their dreams, policies, and objectives resolved. I believe all members would agree that our member for the Western Arctic has been very passionate about making sure that her communities and her people have been represented in this Parliament over the last six years.

On behalf of my constituents in downtown Toronto, we support the government on this bill. We hope that our first

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peoples, with the help of this bill, will realize a good part of the dream they have been working on for so many years.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to participate in today's debate on a bill respecting the establishment of the British Columbia Treaty Commission.

I should start by congratulating the hon. member for Sault Ste. Marie, the hon. Minister of Indian Affairs, for succeeding in bringing this matter before the House, a very difficult task because of the full parliamentary calendar, and in convincing us all of the importance of this bill because it is indeed a very significant bill.

I see that some of the members across the way do not share my opinion but this is nonetheless what I think about the whole issue.

(1705)

In May 1991, the Government of British Columbia made a commitment to ensure that the province would pay its fair share in the settlement of the land claims in question.

In June 1991, the provincial minister of aboriginal affairs announced the approval in principle of the establishment of a treaty commission in charge of co-ordinating the start of land claim negotiations, as recommended by the task force that had been set up for this purpose and whose members included representatives of the various levels of government.

In November 1991, the federal minister of the day, the hon. Tom Siddon as you may recall, approved 19 of the recommendations in the task force's report.

In December 1991, the Premier of British Columbia, Mike Harcourt, and the provincial minister of aboriginal affairs, Andrew Petter, approved the task force's recommendations regarding the land claims in B.C.

In the next 10 months, representatives of Canada, British Columbia and the summit negotiated the agreement on establishing the British Columbia Treaty Commission. The agreement on the BCTC specifies the commission's role, membership, financing, location, duties, powers, decisions, immunity, mandate and reviews.

On September 21, 1992, the Government of Canada, then represented by Prime Minister Mulroney and Minister of Indian Affairs Tom Siddon, the Government of British Columbia, represented by Premier Mike Harcourt and Minister of Aboriginal Affairs Andrew Petter, and the leaders of the First Nations summit formally approved the commission's constitution by signing the agreement on the British Columbia Treaty Commission.

Government Orders

The agreement on the BCTC requires the principals to establish the BCTC through legislative means. The federal and provincial governments agreed to adopt legislation to achieve this goal, while the summit agreed to pass a resolution to that effect.

To enable the BCTC to start operating as soon as possible, commissioners were appointed on an acting basis by provincial and federal orders in council dated April 13, 1995 and April 14, 1993 respectively and by a summit resolution dated April 5. These orders in council gave the commissioners the authority to carry out the agreed mandate pending the adoption of legislation to establish the BCTC as a separate corporate entity. This is of course the beginning of the process we are involved in.

On April 15, 1993, chief commissioner C.J. Connaghan and commissioners Lorne Greenaway, Barbara Risher, Carole Corcoran and Doug Kelly were appointed to the BCTC.

On May 11, 1993, the Summit passed a resolution to fulfil its role and support the establishment of this entity. On May 26 of the same year, the provincial bill was assented to pending the implementation of a federal statute. Political parties support the BCTC legislation.

The hon. Tom Siddon, acting on behalf of the federal government, and the province of British Columbia managed to complete their negotiations on cost sharing by June 1993.

In December, the BCTC started accepting statements of intention to negotiate from First Nations in British Columbia.

You can see the series of events that finally led to us debating this bill in the House today.

In April 1995, Alec Robertson was appointed chief commissioner and Peter Lusztig and Wilf Adam commissioners, while Carole Corcoran and Barbara Risher were re-appointed. Adjustments were made to expiring mandates. Some commissioners were re-appointed and, in other cases, new ones were appointed. On October 5, 1995, the Summit accepted Ms. Corcoran's resignation and designated Miles Richardson to replace her as the First Nations' representative.

(1710)

I would now like to take a moment to look at the duties of this commission we are in the process of officially establishing. The duties of the commission are as follows: to assess the readiness of the parties to begin negotiations, the parties being of course Canada, British Columbia and the first nations; to finance the participation of first nations in the negotiations, in accordance with pre-established criteria; to encourage timely negotiations; to maintain a public record of the status of negotiations; to assist, at their request, the parties to the negotiations in obtaining dispute resolution services; and to report on the status of

negotiations to the Parliament of Canada and to the British Columbia legislature.

In the few minutes that I have left, I want to discuss the status of negotiations. Forty-seven groups are engaged in the BCTC process. These groups represent 77 per cent of the 196 first nations in British Columbia. For those who are not from that province, it always comes as a surprise to hear that there are 196 first nations in British Columbia. In my riding, which you know well, I have the honour of representing the Akwesasne first nation, which is a Mohawk nation.

This is not the time to talk about some of the problems which exist in that region of the country. However, I hope that, at some point, during a parliamentary debate, I can express my wish that the problems which we have been experiencing in the Akwesasne region can end, so that all can live in peace and harmony, and enjoy a degree of prosperity, while complying with the laws passed by this Parliament.

I now go back to the progress made regarding the legislation before this House. The parties have indicated their readiness to negotiate. The negotiators signed framework agreements concerning, for example, the Teslin, Ditidaht and Gitanyow nations. The federal Minister of Indian Affairs, the hon. member for Sault Ste. Marie, signed framework agreements concerning the Sechelt and Gitksan first nations. He also signed other agreements concerning the transborder land claim made by the Champagne, Aishihik and Wet'suwet'en first nations. I apologize to aboriginal members for not pronouncing these names properly, but it is not out of disrespect.

I hope that the House will quickly pass this bill, which is so important for these negotiations. I also hope that all members of this House will support this bill. Mr. Speaker, as you may remember, there was a rather sad episode in this House about a year ago when we discussed the issue of land negotiations in the Yukon. A parliamentary committee even had to sit throughout the night in an attempt to have a bill approved in committee.

(1715)

Indeed, the committee sat all night, until six or seven in the morning.

Needless to say that I hope we do not have to suffer such delays, and that we will proceed as quickly as possible to pass the bill currently before the House.

[*English*]

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

Some hon. members: Question.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Government Orders

Some hon. members: On division.

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

* * *

CULTURAL PROPERTY EXPORT AND IMPORT ACT

The House proceeded to the consideration of Bill C-93, an act to amend the Cultural Property Export and Import Act, the Income Tax Act, and the Tax Court of Canada Act, as reported (without amendment) from the committee.

Hon. John Manley (for the Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.) 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. Manley (for the Minister of Canadian Heritage) moved that the bill be read the third time and passed.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Albina Guarnieri (Mississauga East, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present to the House for third reading a bill on the creation of a mechanism to allow appeals of decisions made by the Cultural Property Export Review Board.

[*English*]

Bill C-93, an act to amend the Cultural Property Export and Import Act, the Income Tax Act, and the Tax Court of Canada Act, passed second reading on October 3. I thank my colleagues for their comments in the House and the progress of the bill. I thank those who gave input at the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage.

[*Translation*]

The purpose of this bill is to establish an appeal mechanism against decisions by the Cultural Property Export Review Board concerning fair market value of cultural property offered as a gift to museums, galleries, archives and libraries in the public sector.

The mechanism is twofold: first the donor or the recipient institution may ask the Review Board to reconsider its first evaluation of fair market value. Donors who have obtained a second evaluation from the Board and are still dissatisfied may then go on to the next stage, appeal of the Board's decision to the Tax Court of Canada.

As announced in the February 1990 federal budget, the responsibility for determining fair market value of cultural goods donated to designated Canadian museums, art galleries and libraries is transferred from Revenue Canada—Taxation to the Canadian Cultural Property Export Review Board.

(1720)

[*English*]

The legislative amendments implementing this change became law in December 1991. In January 1992 the review board assumed this new responsibility.

[*Translation*]

Inadvertently, no provision for appeal from decisions by the board was included in the amendments, despite the fact that a right to appeal had existed previously.

When Revenue Canada still had this responsibility, the lack of an appeal mechanism had raised considerable concern among donors and custodial institutions. The Minister of Canadian Heritage, in co-operation with the Review Board, undertook a series of consultations with the community concerned on the need for an appeal process.

Subsequently we decided to propose legislative changes that would provide for the right to appeal to the Tax Court of Canada. Why should we adopt this bill?

[*English*]

What we want to do through this legislation is restore a natural right that existed up to 1991. With these amendments we have actually proposed two avenues of appeal over disputes concerning the fair market value of donations of cultural property to museums, art galleries, archives, and libraries.

[*Translation*]

The two tier process is effective in that it gives donors a chance to obtain satisfaction more quickly without having to go to court. The latter process is always very long and costly for all parties concerned.

This mechanism is not only a boon to present and potential donors of cultural property. It is not only essential for museums, art galleries, archives and libraries, as present and potential beneficiaries of donations of cultural property. It is important for Canada as a whole and for all Canadians, now and in the future. It encourages donations of items that are outstanding examples of our heritage, so that these can be preserved, exhibited and appreciated, for the greater benefit of future generations.

The Minister of Canadian Heritage is responsible for a department where the concept of heritage is given its broadest possible meaning. Heritage means the set of values we share and the signs by which we recognize ourselves as being members of a group and, indeed, a country.

Today, we can no longer restrict the meaning of heritage to what we have inherited from the past. Heritage is far more than just a collection of historical remains. Canada's heritage is first of all an expression of the ties that bind its citizens and of the unique identity of this country within the international community.

Government Orders

One could say that the concept of heritage cannot be separated from our identity. In the present economic situation, the concerns of heritage and identity are sometimes seen as redundant or of lesser importance.

[*English*]

Heritage and natural identity lie at the heart of economic and fiscal matters, for they animate and inspire the people and activities that drive the economy.

[*Translation*]

As a result of the various ways in which it interacts with other commercial enterprises, the arts and culture sector generates considerable expenditures which stimulate a direct demand for goods and services produced by other industries.

In 1992–93, the direct and indirect financial impact on GDP totalled more than \$24 billion.

(1725)

More than 600,000 corresponding jobs were created directly and indirectly the same year. The amendments we are proposing to the Cultural Property Export and Import Act, the Income Tax Act and the Tax Court of Canada Act will consolidate the sectors of the arts, culture and heritage by making it easier for those who give valuable cultural property to museums, art galleries or libraries.

Investing in our arts, culture and heritage is investing in our collective future. These amendments are therefore of the highest importance to all Canadians, and particularly to the 60 million visitors to our art galleries and museums annually.

I would like to point out here that Canada's museums were the first of its cultural institutions to be established. For example, what is now the Canadian Museum of Civilization was founded in 1881. It can be difficult for museums, galleries and libraries to acquire new collection items. They have not escaped the financial challenge of these difficult times.

They have had significant cuts to their funding. Our museums, our art galleries and our libraries must therefore depend on the generosity of Canadians from all walks of life, on people who could have made money selling their artifacts, on people who, instead, have generously given them to us forever.

To offset the drop in funding faced by our museums, art galleries and libraries at the moment, it is our job to come up with ways these cultural and heritage institutions can acquire cultural property that will enrich their collections. Collections are not simply the irreplaceable assets of museums, art galleries and libraries, they are their *raison d'être*.

Policies and activities involving collections are among the basic mechanisms museums, art galleries, archives and libraries use to define and carry out their mandate. Museums, art galleries, archives and libraries may find it very difficult to complete their collections, for reasons such as rapidly increasing costs.

That is especially true for some art galleries, following the rapid increase in prices on the art market. The speed with which new products appear on the market make it very difficult for museums of science or history to show up to date collections. Donations of cultural assets to the collections are of definite financial value.

For instance, the Cultural Property Export and Import Act concerns a very large range of cultural items, including works of art, historical artifacts, natural science specimens, archives or scientific and technological material of historic significance. Our government has committed to supporting the cultural sector in Canada. Data produced by Statistics Canada show that the Government of Canada remains by far the one that supports the most the cultural sector in Canada. The government wants to go on doing so by continually seeking new ways of promoting the development of the cultural sector.

Innovative structural changes such as Bill C-93 will support the cultural sector without increasing the burden of Canadian taxpayers, so that they can donate their cultural properties instead of selling them to other countries. Canadians must be able to benefit from tax incentives such as those resulting from this legislation. These incentives encourage people to increase their support for our museums, art galleries and libraries.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): Order, please. The hon. parliamentary secretary will certainly have the opportunity to conclude her remarks after the deferred division.

* * *

LAW COMMISSION OF CANADA

The House resumed from October 19 consideration of the motion that Bill C-106, an act respecting the Law Commission of Canada, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): It being 5.30 p.m., pursuant to Standing Order 45 the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred division on the second reading of Bill C-106, an act respecting the Law Commission of Canada.

Call in the members.

(The House divided on the motion, which was agreed to on the following division:)

(Division No. 354)

YEAS

Members

Allmand	Anawak
Anderson	Assadourian
Augustine	Axworthy (Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing)
Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre/Sud-Centre)	Beaumier
Bélair	Bélangier
Bellemare	Bethel
Bevilacqua	Blondin—Andrew
Bodnar	Bonin
Boudria	Brown (Oakville—Milton)
Brushett	Bryden
Caccia	Campbell
Cannis	Catterall
Chan	Cohen
Collins	Cowling
Crawford	Culbert
DeVillers	Dhaliwal
Easter	English
Fewchuk	Finlay
Flis	Fontana
Gaffney	Gagliano
Galloway	Gerrard
Godfrey	Goodale
Graham	Gray (Windsor West/Ouest)
Guarnieri	Harper (Churchill)
Harvard	Hickey
Hopkins	Hubbard
Ianno	Ifitody
Irwin	Jackson
Jordan	Keyes
Kirkby	Knutson
Kraft Sloan	Lastewka
LeBlanc (Cape/Cap-Breton Highlands—Canso)	Lee
Loney	MacDonald
MacLellan (Cape/Cap-Breton—The Sydneys)	Malhi
Maloney	Manley
Marchi	Marleau
Massé	McCormick
McLellan (Edmonton Northwest/Nord-Ouest)	McTeague
Mifflin	Milliken
Mills (Broadview—Greenwood)	Minna
Mitchell	Murphy
Murray	Nault
O'Reilly	Pagtakhan
Payne	Peters
Peterson	Phinney
Pillitteri	Proud
Reed	Richardson
Robichaud	Rock
Scott (Fredericton—York—Sunbury)	Serré
Shepherd	Sheridan
Simmons	Skoke
St. Denis	Stewart (Brant)
Stewart (Northumberland)	Szabo
Taylor	Telegdi
Tobin	Torsney
Ur	Valeri
Verran	Walker
Wappel	Wells
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Zed —119	

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Members

Abbott	Ablonczy
Asselin	Bellehumeur
Benoit	Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville)
Bridgman	Brown (Calgary Southeast/Sud-Est)
Caron	Chatters
Cummins	Duceppe
Epp	Forseth
Frazer	Gauthier
Gilmour	Gouk
Grey (Beaver River)	Grubel
Hanger	Hanrahan
Harper (Calgary West/Ouest)	Harper (Simcoe Centre)

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Hoepfner	Johnston
Landry	Laurin
Lavigne (Beauharnois—Salaberry)	Manning
Mayfield	McClelland (Edmonton Southwest/Sud-Ouest)
Meredith	Mills (Red Deer)
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Sauvageau	Schmidt
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Asselin	Bachand
Bakopanos	Barnes
Bélisle	Bergeron
Bernier (Gaspé)	Bernier (Mégantic—Compton—Stanstead)
Bertrand	Bouchard
Brien	Canuel
Cauchon	Chrétien (Frontenac)
Collenette	Copps
Crête	Dalphond—Guiral
Daviault	de Savoye
Debien	Deshaies
Discepola	Dubé
Duhamel	Dumas
Dupuy	Eggleton
Fillion	Finestone
Fry	Gagnon (Bonaventure—Îles-de-la-Madeleine)
Gagnon (Québec)	Godin
Grose	Guay
Guimond	Harb
Hickey	Jacob
Lalonde	Langlois
Lebel	Leblanc (Longueuil)
Lefebvre	Leroux (Richmond—Wolfe)
Leroux (Shefford)	Lincoln
Loubier	Maclaren
Maheu	Marchand
McGuire	McKinnon
McTeague	O'Brien
Paradis	Patry
Payne	Regan
Robillard	Terrana
Vanclief	Wood

(1750)

[English]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): I declare the motion carried.

(Bill read the second time and referred to a committee.)

Mr. Milliken: Mr. Speaker, I think you would find there is unanimous consent to call it 6.30 p.m.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): Is there unanimous consent to call it 6.30 p.m.?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): Therefore the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at ten o'clock, pursuant to Standing Order 24.

(The House adjourned at 5.56 p.m.)

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