



CANADA

# House of Commons Debates

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OFFICIAL REPORT  
(HANSARD)

**Wednesday, February 12, 1997**

**Speaker: The Honourable Gilbert Parent**

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# HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, February 12, 1997

The House met at 2 p.m.

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*Prayers*

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**The Speaker:** As is our practice on Wednesdays, we will now sing O Canada, and we will be led by the hon. member for Fraser Valley East.

*[Editor's Note: Whereupon members sang the national anthem.]*

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## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

*[English]*

### FIRE SAFETY EDUCATION

**Mr. Janko Perić (Cambridge, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in 1997 it is expected that more than 500 Canadians will die as a result of fires.

Fire damage related costs total over \$10 billion annually. Studies show that public fire safety education not only saves lives but reduces the risk of fire.

Today I would like to congratulate the initiatives of the Kitchener-Waterloo Civitan Club along with the Cambridge, Kitchener and Waterloo fire departments to invest in a first class public fire safety education facility for the region.

The construction of the Children's Safety Village Fire Education Centre in Cambridge will help children and adults learn ways of preventing fires and protecting themselves from fires.

On behalf of my constituents, I applaud the civic initiative taken by the Civitan Club for its efforts to achieve this worthwhile goal and the ongoing dedication of our local firefighters.

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*[Translation]*

### SPECIAL OLYMPICS

**Mrs. Monique Guay (Laurentides, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Bloc Québécois is pleased to add its voice to all those who have recognized Josée Bournival for the accomplished athlete that she

is. Josée Bournival won the bronze medal in both slalom and giant slalom at the Special Olympics World Winter Games held in Toronto from February 1 to February 8.

The purpose of the Special Olympics is to give persons with mental disabilities opportunities to participate in sports. In Quebec, some 1,000 persons with perceptual disabilities are being trained on a regular basis.

Josée Bournival is an all-around athlete. Josée, aged 21, excels at swimming and athletics. Her ranking and winnings at the 1996 National Winter Games in Calgary earned her a spot on the team at the recent World Winter Games. We take this opportunity to congratulate the 82 athletes who participated in these games and salute the trainers for their work, generosity and dedication.

Bravo, Josée. Congratulations on your medals and your achievements.

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*[English]*

### CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION

**Mr. Jim Abbott (Kootenay East, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, amid the uproar of the heritage minister's many flip-flops on CBC radio funding along with the deserved hoots of laughter when she recited the Liberal red book promise of stable multiyear funding for the CBC, a few points have been under reported.

First the heritage minister is the person who hacked, slashed and gouged \$414 million from the CBC funding in the first place. Giving back \$10 million shows incompetence of immense magnitude. It is not only too little too late, but it exhibits management by crisis. She does not have a clue what she is doing. Her chewing gum and baling wire approach to the CBC is crushing that institution.

The Reform Party on the other hand has a rational plan for the CBC to continue funding for CBC radio French and English services, Newsworld, RDI and Radio-Canada International and will privatize television and stereo.

Second, former CBC president Manera has said the heritage minister's \$10 million intrusion by cabinet direction "amounts to a vote of non-confidence in the CBC directors; it has turned them into eunuchs". I agree.

*S. O. 31*

## YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT

**Mr. Chris Axworthy (Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, over the last decade Conservative and Liberal governments and the leaders of our largest corporations have supported a series of policy initiatives that they said would create jobs.

They said the tax burden had to be shifted away from corporations and on to individuals. They demanded free trade and NAFTA. They called for the GST. Deregulation. Privatization. Cuts to social programs. That was all part of a package. Those changes have been made, the agenda is in place, but the jobs simply have not arrived.

Youth unemployment in Canada stands at around 20 per cent. Since 1976 the number of youths with full time jobs in Canada has fallen by one million. This is a betrayal of our youth and Canada's future. Without major changes to the way the government is managing the economy, this betrayal will continue.

The youth employment strategy announced today is a band-aid solution and shows how out of touch this government is. As part of its strategy the government will make available to young Canadians virtual one stop shopping for information. Well if we do not see a drastic change in government policies, young Canadians will continue to look for virtual jobs. They might even be making virtual deposits into their virtual bank accounts.

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## FETAL ALCOHOL SYNDROME

**Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I was delighted to receive the October 16, 1996 joint statement on fetal alcohol syndrome and fetal alcohol effects released by the Minister of Health and the Canadian Paediatric Society.

FAS has widely been recognized in Canada as one of the leading causes of birth defects and developmental delay in children caused by alcohol consumption during pregnancy. The statement acknowledges that even casual use of alcohol during the early weeks of pregnancy may adversely affect the health and well-being of the child to be. Accordingly the joint statement recommends: "The prudent choice for women who are or may become pregnant is to abstain from alcohol".

That caution is an important one. I hope that Health Canada will quickly implement a strategy to educate all Canadians on the threat that alcohol poses to the unborn child.

• (1405)

## SMALL BUSINESS

**Mr. Larry McCormick (Hastings—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington, Lib.):** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for the opportunity to note the small business conferences and information fairs that are occurring in 22 locations across Canada.

I have encouraged entrepreneurs in Hastings—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington to attend the event being planned for February 17 in Kingston. It is a fantastic opportunity for those who are working to start and grow their business and to talk with government officials about programs and services available to them.

Having come to the House from small business, I bring an intimate knowledge of the challenges that entrepreneurs face. I have been honoured to serve on the jobs and small business task force and have both learned from the experience and contributed to its work. In my riding I have worked with others and formed coalitions to share information about federal programs and services, to build networks among existing businesses, and to stimulate awareness and growth for new business endeavours in our area.

Industry Canada and the Business Development Bank of Canada deserve recognition for organizing this series of events across Canada. Thank you to the Minister of Industry for his leadership and for this important activity that connects the government with the people.

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## EID-UL-FITR

**Mr. Dan McTeague (Ontario, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, for Muslims in Canada and throughout the world, last weekend marked the end of the holy month of Ramadan, a month of fasting in order to gain self-restraint and foster inner strength and fulfilment with God.

The end of Ramadan is celebrated with Eid-UI-Fitr, one of the most joyous occasions in the Muslim calendar. Over one billion Muslims worldwide, including nearly 500,000 here in Canada, use Eid-UI-Fitr to give prayers of thanks, celebrate with friends and family, and rejoice in the love of God and of course Islam.

On behalf of this House, I extend our warmest best wishes to the Canadians of Islamic faith on the conclusion of Ramadan and on the occasion of Eid-UI-Fitr.

I also want to take this opportunity to remind members here in this House and in the other place that they are warmly invited to join members of the diplomatic corps and Muslims who are gathering here on Parliament Hill this evening for an Eid-UI-Fitr celebration.

As-salaam alaikum.

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[Translation]

#### EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

**Mr. Paul Crête (Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, for months now, the official opposition has been making very loud noises about the fact that the method used to determine claimants' benefits acts as an incentive for workers to join the underground economy.

Workers' rights groups reached the same conclusion and made this very clear in a demonstration in opposition to the employment insurance reform, which drew 5,000 people in Rivière-du-Loup.

The Minister of Human Resources Development is finally smelling the coffee. He has just noticed one of his reform's many flaws. The minister is now scrambling for solutions.

Perhaps he could ask the Standing Committee on Human Resources Development to look immediately into all the blaring inequities resulting from his reform.

One year ago, committee members suggested potential solutions. Unfortunately, there was an absence of political will. Yet, the quality of life of seasonal workers was at stake then and still is today. Now is the time for the minister to show what he is capable of.

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[English]

#### LIBERAL GOVERNMENT

**Mr. Jay Hill (Prince George—Peace River, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to expose some myths the finance minister is likely to float in the con job due out next Tuesday.

Myth: Liberals did not increase taxes. Thirty-five tax increases totalling \$25 billion in tax revenue increases in just four years.

Myth: Liberals, the defenders of medicare. A 40 per cent cut in medicare transfers to the provinces.

Myth: Liberals concerned about child poverty. Seven billion dollars in cuts for health, education and welfare.

Myth: Jobs, jobs, jobs. There are 1.5 million unemployed and two to three million underemployed, the worst record since the great depression.

Myth: Good times for all. Record bankruptcies and consumer debt.

Myth: Getting the federal House in order. At least \$10 billion of new debt, \$600 billion in total debt and 90 per cent spending cuts in downloading to the provinces.

*S. O. 31*

What Canadians need is a fresh start.

\* \* \*

#### HEALTH CARE

**Mrs. Elsie Wayne (Saint John, PC):** Mr. Speaker, health care in this country and specifically in my province of New Brunswick has seen major cutbacks in funding from the federal government. This Liberal government cut the Canada health and social transfer by \$2.5 billion last year and is scheduled to cut \$4.5 billion this year.

What has happened in the province of New Brunswick? Premier McKenna has now told our seniors that if they have to go into a nursing home and they own their home, he is going to take their home and all of their assets and he is going to sell them to cover the cost of putting them in a nursing home. They have lost their dignity.

Enough is enough. The cuts have gone too far. The measure of a country is in the treatment it extends to its vulnerable citizens: the young, the old, the sick and the poor. On all of these accounts this Liberal government has failed.

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• (1410)

#### SALES AND MARKETING RESOURCE NETWORK

**Mr. Tony Valeri (Lincoln, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Canadians are taking the initiative in strengthening the economic vitality of their local communities.

The Sales and Marketing Resource Network, a volunteer based organization, was founded by a group of local business people in my riding. It assists young entrepreneurs and new small businesses in developing effective marketing strategies.

Because of the network's mentorship program, many businesses have experienced renewed sales growth. In one example a local equipment dealer experienced an increase in sales from \$1 million to \$1.8 million. They attribute this growth directly to mentorship.

It is encouraging to note that so many successful business people are prepared to volunteer as mentors for younger and less experienced entrepreneurs. Building upon this mentorship model and pooling expertise and ideas will ensure our future competitiveness.

In this regard, I want to congratulate members of the Sales and Marketing Resource Network not only for their dedication and hard work, but for providing us with a practical, innovative and effective approach to improving our local economy.

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#### OVARIAN CANCER

**Mrs. Dianne Brushett (Cumberland—Colchester, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House to draw attention to the 4.2 Canadian women who die each day from a silent killer. I speak of ovarian cancer, which is fatal for 70 per cent of its victims. This mortality

*S. O. 31*

rate has not improved in over 30 years. There is no known cure, yet less than .2 per cent of basic cancer research goes to ovarian cancer.

Corinne Boyer was a victim of this silent killer. Her dream was to raise funds for ovarian cancer research, to find a cure and to change these fatal statistics. I am proud and pleased to tell the House that Corinne's husband, Patrick Boyer, took up her cause and today launched the Corinne Boyer Fund for Ovarian Cancer Research.

On behalf of women globally, I thank you Patrick for your commitment to fight this disease and your leadership in raising the profile of women's health. Together we will find a cure for ovarian cancer. Together we will fulfil Corinne's dream.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**BLOC QUEBECOIS**

**Mr. Robert Bertrand (Pontiac—Gatineau—Labelle, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, last week the Bloc Québécois falsely claimed that the federal government has been unfairly collecting taxes in Quebec since 1986, to the tune of 75 to 100 million dollars per year.

The Bloc's claim was based on an old federal-provincial agreement concerning a tax abatement and a 3 per cent surtax that Quebec taxpayers had to pay when calculating the provincial tax abatement.

This alleged new injustice to Quebec by the Canadian government never took place. In fact, it is the Bloc members' little cousins in the PQ government who set the record straight for them.

Now that the truth has come out regarding this issue, the authors of the phoney report should explain to the public why, six days after that gross mistake was uncovered, they have yet to make a public apology.

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**YOUTH WING OF QUEBEC LIBERAL PARTY**

**Mrs. Maud Debien (Laval East, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, on Monday, the youth wing of the Quebec Liberal Party said that not all Quebec federalists want to campaign for the Liberal Party of Canada. Quebec's young Liberals are concerned that their party might join forces with the LPC. Who, in Quebec, could possibly want to campaign for the current Prime Minister of Canada, who did not make good on his most important 1993 election promises, and who let down those who believed in him in the last Quebec referendum?

The current Prime Minister has made a political career out of saying no to Quebecers. The leader of the Liberal Party of Canada

has become an embarrassing ally for Quebec federalists, who still believe a reform of the Canadian federal system is possible.

The president of the Quebec young Liberals, Jonathan Sauvé, confirmed what we already knew: the federal Liberals and their leader are out of touch with the Quebec reality. One does not need to be a sovereignist to realize that.

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[English]

**PARLIAMENTARY OSCARS**

**Mr. Chuck Strahl (Fraser Valley East, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, in honour of the upcoming Academy Awards, I would like to offer Reform's nomination for the parliamentary Oscars.

The best dramatic role for a male: the Prime Minister in "The Shawinigan Strangler".

The best dramatic role for a female: the Deputy Prime Minister's tearful performance in "Shooting from the Lip".

The best director: the defence minister in "The Somalia White-wash".

The best special effects: the Prime Minister's imitation of "Dante's Peak" at the CBC town hall meeting.

The best supportive role in a short comedy: the justice minister in "Airbus".

The best performance by a junior minister: the Secretary of State for Training and Youth in "A Fistful of Dollars".

The best non-performance by an underachiever: the Minister of Health's tobacco saga "The Butt Stops Here".

● (1415)

The best song in an undemocratic nomination feature: "I did it my way" by the Prime Minister again.

The best sports video: the best of all, the entire Liberal team for its role in the golf documentary "True Lies".

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**CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION**

**Ms. Beth Phinney (Hamilton Mountain, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to welcome yesterday's announcement by the Minister of Canadian Heritage of \$10 million in additional funding to CBC radio.

[Translation]

The government has announced stable funding for five years for the CBC.

[English]

Starting in 1998 the government is guaranteeing the CBC stable funding for five years. The CBC will receive a minimum of \$894 million for each of the next five years. This is the first time in

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history that the fiscal framework will include CBC guarantees for five years. The new funding for CBC radio will be directed to new programming, talent development, regional reflection and future growth into new media.

After yesterday's announcement my constituents of Hamilton Mountain and all Canadians who are concerned about the CBC's future can be reassured that the CBC will continue as an important and vibrant institution in Canadian society.

I am sure that all members will join me in congratulating the minister.

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## ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[Translation]

### CONSTITUTION

**Mr. Michel Gauthier (Leader of the Opposition, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, everyone is worried at the turn of events regarding the Government of Quebec's request for a constitutional amendment to modify its school boards. The Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs has taken us all a bit by surprise with his agitation, which is as sudden as it is unexplained.

Does the Prime Minister think that the present consensus of political stakeholders in Quebec is enough to proceed as he should or does he believe, as his Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs does, that a consensus is valid only if it includes lobby groups like Alliance Quebec?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Government of Quebec indicated that it wished to propose a constitutional amendment and we said that we were going to examine the possibility of helping it as much as possible.

Obviously, the decision must first be taken in Quebec, and many groups will state their views. The Quebec minister told his federal counterpart that he wished to act on the basis of a consensus. So we are going to see how the debate unfolds in Quebec. When there is a consensus, fine, but I know that many stakeholders, both among religious groups and among linguistic groups, will make their views known to the National Assembly when the debate takes place.

**Mr. Michel Gauthier (Leader of the Opposition, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I would like the Prime Minister to be a bit clearer. Can he tell us the kind of consensus the federal government feels is necessary in order for it to respond to Quebec's request?

Yesterday, the minister talked about Alliance Quebec; the Prime Minister is talking about various kinds of groups. How extensive does this consensus have to be? And is the consensus of Quebec's

elected representatives, of the political parties sitting in the National Assembly, not enough for the Prime Minister?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have just said that we will see how the debate unfolds in Quebec's National Assembly. I hope that those who have an interest in this question will make their views known. Afterwards, we will assess the situation.

We are not about to reply to a hypothetical question. We are waiting to see what resolution the National Assembly will pass and the nature of the debate surrounding this issue. The question is premature and hypothetical at this time.

**Mr. Michel Gauthier (Leader of the Opposition, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I am sorry, but the question is not hypothetical; we are talking about a situation that has deteriorated because of the inappropriate, unexpected and absolutely incomprehensible intervention of the ineffable federal Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs. It is not hypothetical. He has stirred up discord in this affair, and that is a fact.

• (1420)

By creating the impasse that may prevent the creation of linguistic school boards in Quebec, was the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs not himself responsible for the constitutional dead end in which we will again find ourselves?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we are waiting to see what the National Assembly's resolution will be, the nature of the debate, and then we will review the situation. That was how we proceeded when the government received the Government of Newfoundland's request.

On that occasion, we analyzed all the circumstances, and then the House made its decision. The same approach will be used to try to find a solution to this problem.

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

On September 5, 1996 the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration made a statement to *La Presse* that Ottawa will not wait for Quebecers to reach unanimity on amending section 93 of the Canadian Constitution.

Does the Prime Minister not acknowledge that the approach of his colleague, the former Quebec Minister of Education, is far more positive and would make it possible to settle the matter, unlike the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs' proposal, which is aimed only at stirring up division and adding fuel to the fire?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, there is no contradiction here. The Minister of Citizenship and Immigration has said that unanimity was not required. As for the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, he says that it will require a

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consensus. A consensus is not unanimity. So both ministers have said the same thing.

**Mrs. Suzanne Tremblay (Rimouski—Témiscouata, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I really wonder why the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs will not merely respond to what the Government of Quebec is asking of him.

Why will he not agree to settle the problem? Why does the minister want to join forces with Alliance Québec and stir up strife and discord between the two communities in Quebec? What is he really after?

**Hon. Stéphane Dion (President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to add something in reference to yesterday. We know there is probably a consensus in Quebec at this time for language based school boards. The issue is to find a way to proceed that will ensure that all components of Quebec society can do this in confidence.

Is the Government of Quebec's proposal, the one that is on the table, the way to go? The Government of Canada has no intention of commenting on proposals advanced by this or that group, and is not granting a veto to any group whatsoever.

The Government of Canada is simply saying that, if the Government of Quebec builds a consensus on its proposal, it is highly probable that the Parliament of Canada will be in a position to proceed promptly with modernization of the Quebec school system.

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[English]

**SOMALIA INQUIRY**

**Mr. Preston Manning (Calgary Southwest, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Prime Minister was asked about a report that a former Canadian prime minister was accusing a former deputy minister of defence of participating in a cover-up of a murder in Somalia.

The Prime Minister said that the Somalia commission had the time and the freedom to investigate these charges. But today Mr. Justice Létourneau, the head of the Somalia commission, had this to say: "To suggest, as has been done, that we have ample time to investigate another high level cover-up and at the same time properly complete our current endeavours is both misleading and unfair".

Will the Prime Minister acknowledge that what he said to the House yesterday about the freedom and the ability of the Somalia inquiry to investigate these charges was misleading and unfair?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** No, Mr. Speaker, what I said is that this inquiry has been going on for more than two years. There were three extensions. It had the time to call

all the witnesses it wanted. It still has a month and a half to call the witnesses it wants and it is up to the inquiry to decide.

• (1425)

We did not intervene. We gave it a clear mandate a long time ago. It accepted that mandate with a time limit. We have given it three extensions. The minister of defence gave very good reasons in asking it to complete its work.

**Mr. Preston Manning (Calgary Southwest, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister says the government did not intervene. The head of the Somalia inquiry also said clearly this morning that the government had interfered with the conduct of an independent public inquiry. What he could not say was whether the government had interfered for political reasons.

I ask the Prime Minister directly did his government interfere with the Somalia inquiry for political reasons. Is there a political reason why the Prime Minister does not want the inquiry to get to the bottom of a high level cover-up in the Somalia affair?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, there was clearly no political intervention by the government. We have let the commission operate for more than two years. The minister of defence gave some very good reasons more than a month ago to terminate the inquiry by the end of June, following the advice of the leader of the third party who was inquiring and asking the government to close it as quickly as possible so there would not be anything not judged by the commission before the election.

**Mr. Preston Manning (Calgary Southwest, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, that answer is not good enough for Canadians. Justice Létourneau said this morning that the government's decision has precluded the possibility of effectively investigating any cover-up at the senior level. He said the government understood clearly that this would be the impact of its decision to terminate the inquiry because they had informed the privy council of this implication before the decision was taken.

What political reason did the government have for terminating this independent inquiry when it was specifically forewarned that the effect would be to prevent effective investigation of the cover-up at the top?

**Hon. Douglas Young (Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. leader of the Reform Party certainly understood this process a lot better in September of last year than he does now.

I think it is fair to say that Canadians who have observed the commission now doing its work since March 1995 understand very well what has taken place there and understand very well what has happened in Somalia.

If the hon. leader of the Reform Party really wants to know what motivated the government to provide a third extension to the commissioners to conclude their work by June 30 it is very simple. It is a motivation that I hoped would have been shared by the leader of the Reform Party. I know it is shared by some of the members of his party who understand that it was time to get on with doing the



work that is required to allow the Canadian forces to do the work they are doing today, the work they have honourably done for a hundred years in this country and the work that Canadians expect them to do on behalf of Canada in the future.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

### CONSTITUTION

**Mr. Michel Gauthier (Leader of the Opposition, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister is taking a big risk by leaving the hon. member for Saint-Laurent—Cartier in his position as Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs. It is like appointing a pyromaniac head of the fire brigade: he fans the flames.

Today, the Prime Minister is trying to play down the inflammatory statements made by his Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs. The government tells us: “We will wait and see what Quebec wants”. Well, Quebec has wanted to settle this matter for the past 20 years. There was a consensus. All political parties in Quebec agreed.

Did the Prime Minister change his tune to avoid embarrassing his Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, who created the problem in the first place with his inflammatory statements?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I said it before and I say it again: we will wait until we have the wording of the resolution to be tabled in the National Assembly by the Government of Quebec.

• (1430)

We will listen to the debate that I hope will take place in the National Assembly, and also to the people who make representations, and we will inform you accordingly. That is exactly what we did in the case of Newfoundland, and we will do the same in the case of Quebec.

**Mr. Michel Gauthier (Leader of the Opposition, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs said that he rejected the idea of swapping the constitutional amendment for something else and that there would be no swap, that he failed to see how the government could win points by acting like a used car salesman and that it would lose votes in the process.

Was the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs not acting like a used car salesman himself when he gave Alliance Quebec the impression that its agreement was necessary to get the constitutional amendment, thus giving it the clout it did not even know it had?

### Oral Questions

**Hon. Stéphane Dion (President of the Queen’s Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have said this several times but I will say it again, because the Leader of the Official Opposition may be somewhat hard of hearing. As I said time and again, I did not give a veto to any organization whatsoever.

The question that must be asked is this: Is the official opposition saying that even if Quebec’s anglophone community, which has more than one voice, had strong reservations about the government’s proposal, it would be necessary to proceed regardless? That is a question the opposition should answer.

I have a second question for the opposition, and I will close on this: Does the opposition consider the anglophone community as a pawn, as incapable of making up its own mind? Does it really believe the anglophone community would let itself be guided by the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, that it cannot make up its own mind?

\* \* \*

[English]

### SOMALIA INQUIRY

**Mr. Bob Mills (Red Deer, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, it has finally been revealed that the government knew, prior to shutting down the inquiry, that Fowler, Anderson and Campbell could not be called to testify.

According to the head of the inquiry, the government’s suggestions that Fowler and gang could testify have been erroneous, unfair, not realistic, impossible and misleading.

Would the Prime Minister agree with Commissioner Desbarats that his government, through its political interference, is trying to make the inquiry part of the Somalia cover-up?

**Hon. Douglas Young (Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have been extremely careful since coming to this responsibility not to comment on the agenda of the commission.

Let me say that immediately upon becoming Minister of National Defence I said at that point that I hoped and we expected the commission would report by March 31, as its mandate called for. That should not have come as a surprise to anyone.

Subsequent to that, based on a request by the commission, the government for the third time extended the hearing period and has asked it to report by the end of June. There is no question that if the commissioners decided they were not going to call certain witnesses then obviously they could not appear to testify.

The decision always rested, since March 15, 1995, with respect to who would be called and what would be done with the commissioners and not the government. They chose the road they

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did and they were completely at liberty to do that. However, the government did make the decision that it was in the best interest of the Canadian forces in turning the corner on what we have to do to ask the commissioners, after three extensions, to report by June 30.

**Mr. Bob Mills (Red Deer, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, that sounds like more question avoidance. The Prime Minister and the former defence minister said we would get to the bottom of this. The minister said he would not get involved. He certainly got involved by shutting it down.

The inquiry chairmen say that the government used them to solve its political problems. They say that the government precluded the inquiry from investigating a high level cover-up. This is unprecedented and shameful political interference.

• (1435)

My question, as it was yesterday, is what is the Prime Minister trying to hide.

**Hon. Douglas Young (Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, no one is trying to hide anything.

Is the hon. member and his party suggesting that when an inquiry is begun in this country it should run until such time as all the commissioners, all the parties thereto and all the lawyers involved in the procedure are satisfied that every witness has been heard, that every document has been recovered and that every question has been answered?

If that is the position of the hon. member and his party, that from here on in this country when an inquiry begins it is appropriate to ask for extensions and it is not interference when we say yes but it is when we say no, then the hon. member and his party should go on record and say just that.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**THE CONSTITUTION**

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

On June 20, 1996, the Minister of Justice told the Senate committee on legal and constitutional affairs that the bilateral amendment of term 17 of the Terms of Union of Newfoundland with Canada did not apply as clearly in the case of section 93 of the Constitution Act, 1867.

Would the Minister of Justice, the protector of Canada's Constitution, confirm the remarks of his colleague, the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, and that section 93 may be amended

bilaterally by the Quebec and federal governments according to the proposal Quebec made last Friday?

**Hon. Stéphane Dion (President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, under section 43 of the amending formula of the Constitution Act, 1982, we can confirm without hesitation.

**Mr. Michel Bellehumeur (Berthier—Montcalm, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, my supplementary is still for the Minister of Justice, a real lawyer, who knows about the Canadian Constitution.

Given what he said yesterday in the scrum, will the Minister of Justice confirm his objection to anglophone Quebecers obtaining protection above and beyond that already accorded under section 23 of the 1982 Constitution?

**Hon. Stéphane Dion (President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is not up to the Government of Canada to comment on the proposals that will be made by the various groups in the debate that has just started on the modernization of the Quebec school system.

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh.

\* \* \*

[English]

**SOMALIA INQUIRY**

**Mr. Jack Frazer (Saanich—Gulf Islands, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, the chairman of the Somalia inquiry has accused both the Prime Minister and the defence minister of political interference with the inquiry, interference unprecedented in Canadian history.

Before the decision was even made, the chairman had advised the privy council that such interference would cause a whitewash, yet the Prime Minister proceeded to shut down the inquiry anyway.

My question is to the Prime Minister. Why did the Prime Minister choose a whitewash over the truth by closing down the inquiry? Are his interests in the Canadian forces or are they strictly political?

**Hon. Douglas Young (Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I must say that I am astounded by the tone of the question from my hon. friend.

As I have often said in this place, the hon. member had a distinguished career in the Canadian forces. Surely if he is staying in touch with his colleagues who are still serving in the Canadian forces both in Canada and elsewhere around the world he would know that what we are doing is construed by many as being absolutely essential to the future of the Canadian forces because we have to get on with doing the things that are required.

*Oral Questions*

The one thing I will say in response to my hon. friend's question is that we have not interfered nor do we have any intention of interfering in the process that involves the Somalia inquiry.

I have as much respect for the judicial process and I am sure the hon. chairman of the Somalia inquiry has for the political process and the need to keep the two very separate all the time.

• (1440)

**Mr. Jack Frazer (Saanich—Gulf Islands, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I served for 36 years in the armed forces and I was proud of that. Incidents that have happened since Somalia have caused me to question whether I can still be proud of it. I wonder if the minister realizes the impact of the inquiry.

The Prime Minister, the defence minister and the justice minister all admit to being lawyers, but now their appointed lawyer, Justice Létourneau, has accused them of political interference in the process of the Somalia inquiry. He said that in future judges may have to think about whether they will accept serving on an inquiry because of political interference.

Has it been worth it: a cover-up, a whitewash? Is it worth sacrificing judicial independence for selfish political gain?

**Hon. Douglas Young (Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the member has touched on a question that is of vital importance, as I indicated in an earlier response this afternoon.

If judges or other Canadians called on to participate in this form of inquiry make it a pre-condition that once the inquiry begins they be allowed to continue as long as they wish to ensure that everybody is heard, that every question is addressed and that every document is examined, then that is a legitimate question.

We need to know from my hon. friend whether the commission or anyone else in this place, or anyone else who is observing this scene, agrees with that kind of a prospect, that once a process called a commission of inquiry has begun that not only is it a whitewash, it is a *carte blanche*.

\* \* \*

[*Translation*]

### SOMALIA INQUIRY

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

Time and time again, the Prime Minister has told this House that the Somalia commission can hear any witness it wants concerning the cover-up in the Somalia affair, although Justice Létourneau said this morning that the government had in fact been advised that

imposing a June 30 deadline would prevent the commission from hearing a number of key witnesses, including Ms. Campbell.

How can the Prime Minister maintain that it is business as usual for the Somalia commission, when, this morning, Justice Létourneau described the Prime Minister's statements as "misleading and unjust"?

**Hon. Douglas Young (Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the chairman of the Somalia commission of inquiry made a statement this morning. Thus far, I have refrained from commenting on the evidence heard by the commission, and I am not about to comment on remarks made by the judge who has judicial authority over the whole process.

I think it is very important, in such matters, to always try to strike a balance between the role of the players in a judicial inquiry and the role of the government. Not only is it a custom and a tradition but it is also a Canadian reality that I intend to respect.

**Mr. Pierre Brien (Témiscamingue, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, this role is viewed by the public as government interference in a commission trying to shed light on the matter.

I must point out that, last April, the former Minister of National Defence announced that the worst was still to come in the Somalia affair. Clearly, this government knows things it does not want the commission and the public to know.

Is the deadline imposed on the commission by the government not designed to ensure that the public will never know what the worst is?

**Hon. Douglas Young (Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am convinced that the Canadians who have been following the commission's proceedings realize full well that, the incidents in Somalia that resulted in the death of a number of Somali are basically unacceptable to the people of Canada.

What is of interest to me in the hon. member's question is whether he thinks that, while the commission has already heard in excess of 100 witnesses, we really must comment on the witnesses who were invited to testify? Or that we should have set the commission's schedule?

The hon. member is no doubt aware of the fact that, originally, hearings were scheduled to conclude by the end of December 1995. The government has agreed to extend the commission's mandate three times already. And, the last time, it was extended to the end of June.

• (1445)

If the hon. member and his party believe that commissions of inquiry should have *carte blanche* and that, once they have begun, they should carry on until everyone is happy, the hon. member should propose this to the Canadian public and see how it reacts.

*Oral Questions**[English]***EMPLOYMENT**

**Mr. Roy Cullen (Etobicoke North, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in communities across Canada there are a large number of young people, university graduates, who cannot find jobs and who are seriously underemployed. At the same time, companies in my riding cannot fill job openings because the right skills or the right trades are not available.

My question is directed to the Minister of Human Resources Development.

*[Translation]*

While recognizing and respecting provincial jurisdiction over education, can the minister tell the House how the federal government can get involved to find a solution to this thorny issue, and what it intends to do in this regard?

*[English]*

**Hon. Pierre S. Pettigrew (Minister of Human Resources Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my hon. colleague for his excellent question. This morning, along with 13 of my colleagues, I had the very great privilege of announcing the strategy for youth employment that we are offering to Canadian youths who face a very challenging situation in entering a complex and difficult labour market.

We are working very hard at plugging these young Canadians into the new economy. This morning we created a web site to give them information on all available programs. We are doing this in partnership with the private sector and non-governmental organizations.

They will have internships in the growth sectors of the economy that will allow them to get jobs. We are building on programs that have been demonstrated they work well. Sixty-eight per cent of young people who have participated in an internship program have got a job within six months.

\* \* \*

**SOMALIA INQUIRY**

**Mr. Chuck Strahl (Fraser Valley East, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, here is a summary of this case to date. There was a murder. There was a cover-up of that murder. The Prime Minister and the Minister of National Defence are contributing to the cover-up and the whitewash by ensuring that the Somalia inquiry cannot complete its original mandate.

Why would ministers of the crown contribute to the obstruction of justice in a cover-up, as Justice Létourneau has said?

**The Speaker:** I think your questions are going a little over the line with accusations. I would ask the hon. member to rephrase the question please.

**Mr. Strahl:** Mr. Speaker, my question is, why would they not let justice be done by letting the Somalia inquiry finish the mandate it was given originally?

**Hon. Douglas Young (Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member is capable, and I am sure he is an honourable member, I would appreciate if he would step outside, not like his hon. friend who wanted to step across the floor last week because I am too timid for that kind of activity.

I would like to see him come outside and accuse me of obstructing justice. I would like to see him do that. He is very free with words. It is obvious from the line of questioning he has been using in the House for some time now that it is not justice that is being obstructed, it is just the area above his shoulders.

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh.

• (1450)

**Mr. Chuck Strahl (Fraser Valley East, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, whether the hon. minister wants to hear what I have to say or not, he should listen to the words of Justice Létourneau. Justice Létourneau said that he and the Prime Minister both knew ahead of time that shutting down the inquiry would result in a cover-up and a whitewash. What more does he want to know? There is a murder involved. There is a cover-up and he is involved in the cover-up. Why does he not just let the Somalia inquiry do its job so that it can get—

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh.

**Some hon. members:** Order.

**The Speaker:** I judge that question to be out of order and I am going to pass. The hon. member for Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup.

\* \* \*

*[Translation]***AÉROPORTS DE MONTRÉAL**

**Mr. Paul Crête (Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Transport.

In a judgment delivered this morning, the Quebec superior court prohibited the transfer of international flights from Mirabel to Dorval, and ordered that the work under way at Dorval airport be stopped. Mr. Justice Pierre Viau feels that the decision made by the firm Aéroports de Montréal is illegal and even constitutes an abuse of power.

*Oral Questions*

What does the minister have to say, now that a judge has ruled that the transfer could not take place without changing the lease between ADM and the federal government?

**Hon. David Anderson (Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his question. As the member pointed out, the judgment was just delivered this morning, in Montreal, by the Quebec superior court.

I have not had an opportunity to take a look at it. This decision must be analyzed in depth and in detail before I can comment on it. I certainly hope to do so in the coming days, and I have already instructed my department's officials to take a thorough look at the judgment.

**Mr. Paul Crête (Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, does the minister intend to hold public hearings to consult with stakeholders from Montreal, as the Bloc Québécois has been asking, and as was suggested by the judge in his ruling, so as to make a legal decision regarding this issue?

**Hon. David Anderson (Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his suggestion but, before making any decision, I must first look at the judgment handed down this morning in Montreal.

I will do so and so will my officials. Once this review is completed, I will immediately inform the hon. member accordingly, and we will take any action required. However, let us not forget that ADM is a local administration and that the Montreal airports come under its responsibility and not that of the federal Department of Transport.

\* \* \*

[English]

**SOMALIA INQUIRY**

**Mr. Preston Manning (Calgary Southwest, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, in their responses today neither the Prime Minister nor the defence minister has acknowledged the seriousness of the charges made against the government by the Somalia inquiry commissioners, a commission that they themselves set up: charges of political interference with an independent tribunal, charges of making misleading and unfair statements on the work of the tribunal, and charges of contributing to a whitewash.

Has the government no response to these serious charges other than to ignore them?

**Hon. Douglas Young (Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have a great respect for legal procedures. I have great respect for the judiciary. I have been, as the hon. member well knows, very meticulous in

never commenting on how the commission conducts its business, what witnesses it calls or what testimony is presented by witnesses before that commission.

I respect the tradition that governments have responsibilities and commissions of inquiry and commissioners who are members have their responsibilities.

• (1455)

I have no intention on behalf of the government of responding to the comments that were made this morning by the commissioners. I fully understand they can be frustrated and concerned about the way they are going to have to do their work over the next several months.

I think I can say on behalf of many Canadians, both inside and outside the military, that some people may have had some concerns about the way the commission has gone about its business. I am not one of them who is going to comment on it today.

I hope the hon. member will understand that at the end of the day we can do all the squirming and twisting about what he meant in September, he can do all the kinds of exercises that he and his colleagues are going through here today, but he had better decide at some point whether or not he is interested more in the next election or in the future of the Canadian forces. Canadians know where we stand on that.

**Mr. Preston Manning (Calgary Southwest, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, the net result of all that the minister has said is that he is choosing to ignore the charges made by the commissioners against the government: charges of political interference, charges of making misleading statements and charges of participating in a whitewash.

That being the case, how can the public possibly believe that the government will respond to the final report of the commission when it is already ignoring what the commission is saying about interference, deception and cover-up?

**Hon. Douglas Young (Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member changes his approach to this whole question as often as he changes his hairdo. The whole problem is whether or not he understands what is going on.

If the hon. member is asking us to get into a public debate with commissioners conducting a quasi-judicial inquiry, what would he then say about what we were doing? Would he say that it was political interference or does he understand the concept of separation between what the judicial process is about and what government is about?

*Oral Questions***TERRORISM**

**Ms. Colleen Beaumier (Brampton, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

According to a recent *Globe and Mail* article, the Indian government alleges that many Canadian based organizations are funding militants in Punjab. However, the RCMP indicates that this is not the case.

Could the minister comment on these allegations by the Indian government and explain to the Sikh community why he is setting up a working group on terrorism with the Government of India?

**Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, over the last several months we have seen the tragic consequences of terrorist activities around the world. One way of dealing with terrorism is to increase the co-operation between Canada and a number of countries to ensure that we share information and work together.

Last summer at the meetings in Paris on terrorism we agreed that we would undertake to enhance these kinds of relationships.

The working group between Canada and India is simply to improve our co-operation. In no way is it tied to any one specific group. In no way is it tied to particularly the Sikh community, which we see as making an enormously valuable contribution in this country. It is so valuable that this January we opened an office in the Punjab so we could take advantage of the enormous opportunities for trade and investment in that area between the Sikh community in Canada and their counterparts in India.

It really is an opportunity for us to expand and develop a new relationship where the Sikh community can make an enormous contribution to Canada as a result.

\* \* \*

**EMPLOYMENT**

**Mr. Nelson Riis (Kamloops, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister.

He will know that the red book indicated that jobs were going to be his number one priority. In October 1993, 1.5 million Canadians were out of work and today 1.5 million Canadians are out of work.

He will also be aware that a number of organizations today presented an alternative budget with specific recommendations on job creation.

Would the Prime Minister consider carefully these recommendations on how to create jobs in the next number of months before tabling the next budget?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we want to create more jobs and any good ideas to that effect will be considered by the Minister of Finance, who will make, as he has made in the past, job creation a number one priority.

We are disappointed that unemployment is still too high. However, the reality is that in the last three years and four months more than 700,000 new jobs have been created in Canada. We wish it would have been more than that. All the private forecasters predict that next year is going to be a very good year in terms of growth and job creation. We will have job creation as the number one priority and results in 1997.

• (1500)

**The Speaker:** Colleagues, during question period I ruled a question out of order. I want you to know why I ruled it out of order because I am going to take it one step further.

The hon. member for Fraser Valley East said that the minister is involved in a cover-up. I judge that question to be out of order. More than that, an accusation like that in my view cannot be allowed to stand. I would appeal to the hon. member for Fraser Valley East to withdraw those comments.

**Mr. Chuck Strahl (Fraser Valley East, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I was repeating, I thought, the words—

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh.

**The Speaker:** I remind all hon. members that we cannot use other people's words to say in this House what we ourselves cannot say. It is for that reason that I judge the question to be out of order and it is for that reason that I put the question directly to the member for Fraser Valley East. I ask him to withdraw those words which I mentioned earlier.

**Mr. Strahl:** Mr. Speaker, I will reluctantly withdraw.

**The Speaker:** There are no conditions to a withdrawal. I appeal to the hon. member for Fraser Valley East, a respected parliamentarian. I simply put the question. Will the hon. member withdraw, yes or no?

**Mr. Strahl:** Mr. Speaker, I will not withdraw.

\* \* \*

• (1505)

**NAMING OF MEMBER**

**The Speaker:** My colleagues, in the exchanges in question period and in debate I know many times we are caught up in the debate. Many times there are many pressures on us to do one thing or another.

I am going to appeal to an officer of the House who knows full well the extent of whatever his decision will be on all members. The hon. whip of the Reform Party is, as I said before, a respected member. This is no longer between the hon. whip, whom I do

respect a great deal, or anybody else in this House. It is for the Speaker of this House, to whom you have conferred this authority, to judge that which is acceptable and unacceptable in this House.

In view of that, I ask the hon. member to please reconsider. I ask him again if he will simply withdraw the statements that he made which I, as your spokesperson in this House, have judged to be unparliamentary.

My colleague, I address myself to you directly. I ask you to withdraw those statements made in question period which I ruled to be unparliamentary and unacceptable.

**Mr. Strahl:** Mr. Speaker, I do respect the Chair and I mean no disrespect but I did try to reluctantly withdraw. You would not accept that. I will not withdraw further.

**The Speaker:** It is more with sadness than anything else that I, as your Speaker, name Mr. Strahl. It is with regret that I have to name you for disregarding the authority of the Chair.

Pursuant to the authority granted to me by Standing Order 11, I order you to withdraw from the House for the remainder of this day's sitting.

[*Editor's Note: And Mr. Strahl having withdrawn:*]

• (1510)

**The Speaker:** To the hon. member for Lethbridge, before I entertain your point of order, I have to ask you if it pertains to the incident which has just occurred. If so, I will not hear your point of order. Is it on that incident?

**Mr. Speaker (Lethbridge):** Mr. Speaker, the matter is with regard to the subsequent action of my colleagues with regard to this matter.

**The Speaker:** With respect, my colleague, I will not hear that point of order.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Laurin:** Mr. Speaker, would it be possible to ask you something about what has just happened, in order to prevent any recurrence? May I ask you a question?

**The Speaker:** Dear colleague, what happened here in the House is quite simply that there was a situation in which language was used that I judged to be unparliamentary.

I can tell you that if I judge something to be unparliamentary today, it is with respect to this particular case. A case that arises a month from now will not necessarily be the same.

**Mr. Laurin:** Mr. Speaker, my point concerns not the substance of the question but the procedure.

**The Speaker:** Dear colleague, if you wish to discuss the procedure with me, I invite you to do so in my office later. I will then be available to talk about the procedure.

*Routine Proceedings*

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[*Translation*]

### ORDER IN COUNCIL APPOINTMENTS

**Mr. Paul Zed (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to table in the House today, in both official languages, a number of order in council appointments which were made recently by the government.

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

\* \* \*

### GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

**Mr. Paul Zed (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 responses to 50 petitions.

\* \* \*

[*English*]

### COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

#### TRANSPORT

**Mr. Reg Alcock (Winnipeg South, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the sixth report of the Standing Committee on Transport with respect to a national highway renewal strategy.

\* \* \*

[*Translation*]

### INDUSTRY

**Mr. David Walker (Winnipeg North Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the fourth report of the Standing Committee on Industry.

**Mr. Nic Leblanc (Longueuil, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present the Bloc Québécois' dissenting opinion on the interim report by the Standing Committee on Industry.

• (1515)

We have a few recommendations which I would like to briefly explain. I have always promoted research and development, but I must advise the government to be careful about its marketing of R and D. When it speaks of a future coast-to-coast strategy, I must also warn the government that this policy has not worked in favour of Quebec on the tokamak project. We find the coast-to-coast aspect extremely alarming.

*Routine Proceedings*

Some of our other recommendations have to do with the fact that Canada has made more cuts to research funding than any other G-7 country. We also know that Quebec obtains only 19 per cent of federal funding for R and D.

We must therefore point out to the government that there are few recommendations regarding the report it is submitting to the Minister of Finance.

## PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

**Mr. Paul Zed (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present the 53rd report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs, regarding the membership of the Standing Committee on Justice and the associate membership of the Standing Committee on Finance.

If the House gives its consent, I intend to move concurrence in the 53rd report later this day.

\* \* \*

[English]

**CANADA-CHILE FREE TRADE AGREEMENT IMPLEMENTATION ACT**

**Hon. Arthur C. Eggleton (Minister for International Trade, Lib.)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-81, an act to implement the Canada-Chile free trade agreement and related agreements.

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

\* \* \*

**DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE ACT**

**Mrs. Jan Brown (Calgary Southeast, Ind.)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-371, an act to amend the Department of Justice Act.

She said: Mr. Speaker, the bill so named calls for the establishment of an oversight committee to oversee all proposed legislation and policy and existing legislation and policy that has an actual or potential effect on children. The enactment makes the Department of Justice the central co-ordinating body of this committee.

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

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE**

## PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

**Mr. Paul Zed (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, with leave of the House, I move that the 53rd report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs tabled in the House today be concurred in.

[English]

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Milliken):** Does the hon. member have the unanimous consent of the House to move the motion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Milliken):** The House has heard the terms of the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion, including with the support of the independent members of the House?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

(Motion agreed to.)

\* \* \*

● (1520)

**PETITIONS**

## AIDS

**Mr. Tony Ianno (Trinity—Spadina, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present three petitions on behalf of many of my constituents in Trinity—Spadina. The petitioners, Voice of Positive Women and AIDS Committee of Toronto, call upon the Government of Canada to ensure dedicated AIDS funding at least at current levels beyond March 1998 and to renew the national AIDS strategy.

On behalf of my constituents I humbly submit these petitions with my full support.

[Translation]

## NATIONAL HIGHWAY SYSTEM

**Mr. Richard Bélisle (La Prairie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, today I have the honour of tabling in the House two petitions signed by residents of La Prairie, my riding, and various communities on Montreal's south shore.

The first petition calls upon Parliament to urge the federal government to co-operate with provincial governments on improving the national road network.

## GASOLINE TAX

**Mr. Richard Bélisle (La Prairie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I have a second petition which asks Parliament not to increase the federal excise tax on gasoline in the next federal budget that will be tabled by the Minister of Finance on February 18.

[English]

## VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

**Hon. Audrey McLaughlin (Yukon, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I am presenting petitions today from the Yukon from a number of people who are concerned about the recent case of Susan Klassen who was murdered by her husband.

As deeply concerned citizens, the petitioners believe that the provocation defence that is currently used in wife slaughter cases inappropriately and unjustly changes the focus of the criminal trial from the behaviour of the accused and his intention to murder to the behaviour of the victim. Therefore the petitioners are calling



upon Parliament to review and change relevant provisions of the Criminal Code to ensure that men take responsibility for their violent behaviour toward women.

[*Translation*]

IMMIGRATION

**Mr. Ronald J. Duhamel (St. Boniface, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to present this petition.

[*English*]

This petition is being presented on behalf of citizens who represent the views of many thousands of Canadians throughout the nation.

The petitioners request that Parliament eliminate or reduce the right of landing fee for immigrants. They also ask that Parliament relate the payment of the landing fee to the wealth of the applicant and that it be paid only upon acceptance of the visa.

I am pleased to give my support to this request.

PAROLE INELIGIBILITY

**Mr. John Nunziata (York South—Weston, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate your kindness.

Over the last three years I have introduced petitions containing the names of tens of thousands of Canadians who have supported the repeal of section 745 of the Criminal Code, the provision that allows convicted killers to apply for early release or to have their parole ineligibility reduced.

Again, I would like to present petitions. I should note that I am flanked this afternoon by the hon. member from Trinity—Spadina and the hon. member for Calgary Southeast, both of whom support the repeal of section 745, together with the petitioners on this particular petition.

YOUNG OFFENDERS ACT

**Mr. John Nunziata (York South—Weston, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the second petition relates to the Young Offenders Act.

Mr. Speaker, as a lawyer and as a Speaker, you know that there is considerable concern in the country with respect to the provisions of the Young Offenders Act. It is felt that the Young Offenders Act does not adequately deal with crimes committed by people under the age of 18. Accordingly the petitioners call upon this Parliament, this government in the precious few days that remain before the next general election campaign, to bring in some meaningful amendments to the Young Offenders Act so that Canadians across the country can regain some of that lost respect and support for the criminal justice system.

*Routine Proceedings*

[*Translation*]

NATIONAL HIGHWAY SYSTEM

**Mr. Jean-Paul Marchand (Québec-Est, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to table a petition from my constituents in Quebec-Est in which they call upon Parliament to urge the federal government to co-operate with the provincial governments on improving the national road network.

[*English*]

HIGHWAYS

**Mr. Len Taylor (The Battlefords—Meadow Lake, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour today to present, pursuant to Standing Order 36, a petition to the House of Commons signed by residents of my constituency from the city of North Battleford and other communities like St. Walburg, Cut Knife, Lashburn, Cochin, Wilkie and Marsden, Saskatchewan.

• (1525 )

The petitioners note that 38 per cent of the national highway system in Canada is substandard. The national highway policy study identified job creation, economic development, national unity, saving lives and avoiding injury, lower congestion, lower vehicle operating costs and better international competitiveness as benefits of the proposed national highway program.

Therefore, the petitioners call upon Parliament to urge the federal government to join with provincial governments to make the national highway system upgrading possible.

PUBLIC SAFETY OFFICERS COMPENSATION FUND

**Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have three petitions today. The first comes from Saskatoon, Saskatchewan.

The petitioners would like to draw to the attention of the House that our police and firefighters place their lives at risk on a daily basis as they serve the emergency needs of all Canadians. They also state that in many cases the families of officers who are killed in the line of duty are often left without sufficient financial means to meet their obligations.

The petitioners therefore pray and call upon Parliament to establish a public safety officers compensation fund to receive gifts and bequests for the benefit of families of police officers and firefighters who are killed in the line of duty.

TAXATION

**Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the second petition comes from Simcoe, Ontario.

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.

*Routine Proceedings*

The petitioners therefore pray and call upon Parliament to pursue initiatives to assist families that choose to provide care in the home for preschool children, the chronically ill, the aged or the disabled.

## LABELLING OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

**Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the final petition comes from Mulgrave, Nova Scotia.

The petitioners would like to draw to the attention of the House that the consumption of alcoholic beverages may cause health problems or impair one's ability and specifically, that fetal alcohol syndrome or other alcohol related birth defects are 100 per cent preventable by avoiding alcohol consumption during pregnancy.

The petitioners therefore pray and call upon Parliament to enact legislation to require health warning labels to be placed on the containers of all alcoholic beverages to caution expectant mothers and others of the risks associated with alcohol consumption.

## TAXATION

**Mr. Nelson Riis (Kamloops, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, it is my honour to present a petition pursuant to Standing Order 36. Thousands of Canadians have signed this petition. I suspect many of them are from Kingston, although I have not been able to identify them specifically.

The petitioners point out that corporate contributions to the public revenues of Canada are already the lowest among the seven major economies of the world. Whereas the corporations' share of that has fallen to less than 10 per cent, the share borne by individuals has skyrocketed. The petitioners also draw to our attention a number of problems with the existing tax system, including the GST.

The petitioners ask Parliament not to proceed with the GST scheme that is now before the House, or any other plan to further reduce the remaining corporate taxes at the expense of middle class working individuals and families in Canada, and to undertake fair tax reform of a comprehensive nature.

## ASSISTED SUICIDE

**Mr. Nelson Riis (Kamloops, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, in this petition hundreds of students at the University College of the Cariboo point out that the House is considering the legalization of assisted suicides. They are calling upon Parliament to refrain from enacting any such legislation and to give priority toward making palliative care available to all residents of Canada.

## HUMAN RIGHTS

**Mr. Nelson Riis (Kamloops, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, again pursuant to Standing Order 36, the petitioners in this petition call upon Parliament to amend the Canadian Human Rights Act to prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and to adopt all

the necessary measures to recognize the full equality of same sex relationships in federal law.

Again, these are primarily from students and faculty at the University College of the Cariboo in Kamloops.

\* \* \*

## QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

**Mr. Paul Zed (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the following questions will be answered today: Nos. 98 and 99.

[Text]

Question No. 98—**Mr. Simmons:**

Could the Minister of Health specify what initiatives will replace those funded under Phase II of Canada's drug strategy when it ends in March, 1997, and in particular, will there be an ongoing role for the Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse?

**Hon. David Dingwall (Minister of Health, Lib.):** The enforcement component of the strategy has been renewed. Health Canada will continue to provide leadership and undertake national co-ordination on substance abuse issues under the population health approach, working collaboratively with provincial agencies, non-governmental organizations, private sector, and multilateral organizations. Based on learnings and best practices developed during the second phase of Canada's drug strategy, Health Canada will focus its prevention efforts on the needs of youth, seniors and medication use, training needs of health professionals, transmission of HIV and overdose deaths among injection drug users, and impaired driving.

Recognizing the important contribution of the Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse, Health Canada will provide a grant of \$500K for fiscal year 1997-98. The centre will continue to play a key role in developing and disseminating substance abuse expertise in Canada.

Question No. 99—**Mr. Simmons:**

Could the Minister of Health provide a detailed explanation of the effect of the newly adopted population health approach on existing initiatives currently aimed directly at groups adversely affected by family violence?

**Hon. David Dingwall (Minister of Health, Lib.):** The government remains committed to dealing with the serious problem of family violence. Health Canada's goal is to reduce the incidence of family violence. The department's approach includes both short and long-term elements: Health Canada will continue to operate the National Clearinghouse on Family Violence, to offer training and education to frontline workers, to enhance the security of emergency shelters and to improve the legislative framework related to situations of family violence. At the same time, under the population health approach, Health Canada will focus on preventing family violence in the long term by expanding its understanding of the conditions that lead to violence or that increase the risks of violence and by acting on that knowledge.

*Government Orders*

[English]

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

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Milliken):** Is that agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

\* \* \*

## MOTIONS FOR PAPERS

**Mr. Paul Zed (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I ask that the Notices of Motions for the Production of Papers also be allowed to stand.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Milliken):** Is that agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

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**GOVERNMENT ORDERS**

[Translation]

## CANADIAN FOOD INSPECTION AGENCY ACT

**Hon. Marcel Massé (for the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.)** moved that Bill C-60, an act to establish the Canadian Food Inspection Agency and to repeal and amend other acts as a consequence, be read the third time and passed.

• (1530)

[English]

**Mr. Taylor:** Mr. Speaker, since question period I have been a little disturbed by the lack of attendance in the Chamber. I notice that a quorum is not present. I wonder if you might call for a quorum at this time.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Milliken):** Perhaps the bells could be rung. I do not see a quorum.

• (1535)

*And the count having been taken:*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Milliken):** I see a quorum. Resuming debate.

Is the House ready for the question?

**Some hon. members:** Question.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Milliken):** Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

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

**Some hon. members:** Yea.

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

**Some hon. members:** Nay.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Milliken):** In my opinion the yeas have it.

*And more than five members having risen:*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Milliken):** Call in the members.

*And the bells having rung:*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Milliken):** At the request of the chief government whip the vote on Bill C-60 has been deferred until 5.15 p.m. later this day.

[Translation]

**Mr. Laurin:** Mr. Speaker, at the very moment when you put the question on Bill C-60, we had a member who was in his place and was supposed to speak, but he was not recognized.

I wish someone would explain what happened. According to procedure, a Liberal was scheduled to speak before our member, and our member was in his place—you saw him come in and go to his seat—but he was not recognized.

I would ask the Chair to let us go back and resume debate on Bill C-60.

[English]

**Mr. Paul Zed (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I listened carefully to what my hon. colleague said. In fact there was no member in his place at the time that the question was put. I would respectfully put to the Chair that the question was duly called and passed at the time. I would respectfully suggest to the hon. member that the matter has been dealt with and is closed.

• (1540)

[Translation]

**Mr. Crête:** Mr. Speaker, as regards Bill C-60, it is customary in Parliament at third reading for a member of the government to speak first and then be followed by a member of the opposition.

The Liberals decided not to present a speaker. I was on my way to hear the speech by the Liberal member. The spirit of the rules must be followed, but rules should not interpreted to the letter, which would prevent us from speaking on this bill, for which we have moved some 100 amendments and have made a number of suggestions and which will have significant financial impact.

The House and the Liberal majority would be acting in bad faith if they failed to recognize the opposition member due to speak on the subject.

*Government Orders**[English]*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Milliken):** The Chair has heard the arguments and I thank members on all sides for their assistance on this matter but I think the answer is fairly clear.

A quorum call was in progress and hon. members chose to come to the House or not while the bells were ringing. The bells were rung for the purpose of bringing members to the House. With respect, at the end of the quorum call naturally the Chair called for the resumption of debate on the bill which was before the House. Members who were here at the time the quorum call occurred will note that the Chair had put the question on the motion and called for debate but no one had risen to speak because the quorum called intervened.

As your Speaker, I called for debate on the motion and no one rose to debate the motion. I do not want to say something that I should not say concerning the presence or absence of members from the House, but no one rose to speak on the motion. Accordingly, I said: Is the House ready for the question? And the answer was, yes. I then received the document to put the question.

It may be that while the question was being put members entered the House but no one rose to speak while I waited for the document to put the question. I submit that the Chair has acted in accordance with the practices and principles of the House in this matter.

*[Translation]*

As the hon. member for Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup just said, he was on his way to the House when the question was put to the House. He was too late. He must be here. If the hon. minister does not want to speak at third reading, that is his prerogative, he has no obligation to do so. For personal reasons, he decided not to speak.

As you know, I serve the House, but, in my opinion, the situation is as I described it. There is no point of order, and the matter is closed.

**Mr. Laurin:** Mr. Speaker, when you checked to see if there was a quorum, were you not supposed to determine if there was a quorum according to the number of members in their seat?

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Milliken):** I counted the members in the House. I did not check whether they were all in their seat, but I determined that 20 members were present in the House.

**Mr. Laurin:** Mr. Speaker, are you not supposed to count only those members in their seats?

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Milliken):** With all due respect to the hon. member, I do not think it necessary that every member be at his own seat. It is enough that he be in the House. There were 20 members in the House when the bells stopped ringing. I counted the members myself, and am satisfied the House Standing Orders were followed.

**Mr. Laurin:** Mr. Speaker, am I to understand that your ruling, based on the Standing Orders, is that you can count members regardless of where they are in this House for the sake of maintaining quorum?

• (1545)

If that is your ruling, I respect it. It is just that, in making your ruling, I heard you say: "I think that—", which seemed to indicate you were unsure. Could we please check what the Standing Orders say?

If you tell me that is what they say, I will take your word for it. We will do the checking ourselves.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Milliken):** Perhaps I did not make myself clear enough, but the fact is that I was satisfied that there were 20 members present in the House, and that is what our Standing Orders call for. They were not in the galleries, they were here, in the House. I counted 20 members, so that is the end of the matter.

\* \* \*

*[English]***NUCLEAR SAFETY AND CONTROL ACT**

**Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.)** moved that Bill C-23, an act to establish the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission and to make consequential amendments to other acts, be read the third time and passed.

**Mrs. Marlene Cowling (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am more than pleased to speak in the House today regarding Bill C-23, the Nuclear Safety and Control Act.

The current legislation in this area is 50 years old. As the minister noted earlier, it suffers from several deficiencies and is outdated. The development application and the use of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes brings many benefits to Canada. However, it also entails some important responsibilities.

It is high time we had modern legislation to govern the regulation of nuclear activities. The benefits of nuclear technology include a safe and secure supply of energy, some 26,000 direct and 10,000 indirect jobs and significant export revenues from the sale of Candu reactors and uranium.

Nuclear science has brought us advanced medical treatments, agriculture and scientific applications and real environmental advantages. To maximize these benefits and minimize the risks, Canada has had to take certain precautions to protect public health and safety as well as the environment.

*Government Orders*

Canadians insist on very high standards for the regulation of nuclear activity, higher than for most other forms of technology.

Since 1946 the agency charged with enforcing those standards, the Atomic Energy Control Board, has done an excellent job. Its vigilance is one reason that Canada has an enviable nuclear safety record. However, the agency needs our help.

I would like to take a few minutes to expand on the role of the AECB and to demonstrate why a new, modern framework is needed to ensure that the nuclear regulatory authority in Canada can continue to fulfil its mandate.

As has already been mentioned, the Atomic Energy Control Act was proclaimed in 1946, shortly after the end of the second world war. Apart from one amendment in 1954, the act has remained essentially unchanged for half a century. During that time there have been dramatic changes in the extent and nature of nuclear activities in Canada and abroad and in society's expectations of government regulations. There has also been a shift in emphasis at the AECB. The agency continues to be concerned with the security of nuclear information and materials. Today, however, most of its activities focus on regulating the health, safety and environmental aspects of nuclear technology.

• (1550)

In fact, these have been the most important issues for the AECB since 1960 when the first health and safety regulations were established under the Atomic Energy Control Act. In the 1970s and 1980s concern for the environment surged to the forefront of the public agenda. This has also helped shape the AECB's modern mandate.

Let me say a few words about how the AECB operates. The AECB is an independent regulatory agency reporting to Parliament through the Minister of Natural Resources. It is directed by a five member board, one of whom is the president of the board.

The president of the board supervises approximately 400 officers and staff. Most of these employees are based at the AECB headquarters in Ottawa—

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Bellehumeur:** Mr. Speaker, I have been listening carefully to the hon. member, but I realize I am about the only one here. We do not have a quorum. I am asking for a quorum count, Mr. Speaker.

[*English*]

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Milliken):** Sound the bells, please, and summon the members.

*And the count having been taken:*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Milliken):** I see a quorum. Resuming debate.

**Some hon. members:** Question.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Milliken):** Is the House ready for the question? Is the hon. member rising to speak?

[*Translation*]

Does the hon. member wish to take part in the debate? Are there other members who wish to take part in the debate?

• (1555)

**Mr. Deshaies:** Mr. Speaker, are we debating Bill C-23, dealing with the nuclear safety commission?

[*English*]

**Mr. Kilger:** Mr. Speaker, I think you would find that the parliamentary secretary responsible for the very important portfolio of natural resources is in her place and ready to continue the debate.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Milliken):** I am asking if there are members wishing to speak. If members who wish to speak would rise, I would recognize them.

The parliamentary secretary had the floor. I did not see her rising before. If she is rising, I will recognize her so that she can conclude her remarks.

**Mrs. Cowling:** Mr. Speaker, let me say—

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Laurin:** Mr. Speaker, when you asked if someone wished to speak, when we asked for a quorum count, the hon. parliamentary secretary was already in the process of making her speech.

When debate resumed, you said "Resuming debate" and the hon. parliamentary secretary said she did not wish to use the time she had left. That is what I concluded, since she said she was done, so we could proceed to other matters. Following this, our colleague rose and said: "I wish to speak to Bill C-23".

Earlier, we experienced the same situation with Bill C-60 and you did not recognize our colleague, who had not reached his seat. In this case, I do not think you should let the hon. parliamentary secretary carry on, because she clearly stated her desire to end her speech.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Milliken):** I appreciate the comments made by the hon. member for Joliette. I did not hear the hon. parliamentary secretary when she said, as the member pointed out, that she did not wish to continue to speak in this debate.

[*English*]

What I did say was: Resuming debate. No one rose. I said: Do other members wish to speak? At that point two members rose, including the hon. member for Abitibi. I concluded from that, since the parliamentary had already risen, she wished to resume her remarks.

*Government Orders*

If she said otherwise earlier I did not hear it. She did not rise earlier, I agree, and that is why I asked again: Is there anyone who wishes to speak, because I assumed that the hon. member for Abitibi was going to speak.

I think it is reasonable in the circumstances that the parliamentary secretary conclude her remarks, since the two indicated at the same time that they wished to speak.

Accordingly, I call on the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources.

**Mrs. Marlene Cowling (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, let me say a few words about how the AECB operates.

The AECB is an independent regulatory agency reporting to Parliament through the Minister of Natural Resources. It is directed by a five member board, one of whom is the president of the board.

The president of the board supervises approximately 400 officers and staff. Most of these employees are based at AECB headquarters in Ottawa, with resident inspectors stationed at all nuclear generating stations, at four regional offices and at a uranium mining division in Saskatoon.

Hon. members may be interested to know that the large part of AECB's operating costs are recovered from operators through licensing fees. During 1994-95 licensing fees generated \$28 million in revenues, reducing the net cost to the federal government of delivering AECB services to \$15 million. This annual expenditure will be further reduced as the board's cost recovery program matures over the next five years.

Canada's approach to nuclear regulation is based on the internationally accepted principle that the operator of nuclear technology is responsible for safety and must justify the proposed use.

The role of the AECB is to set safety standards and to ensure, through a variety of compliance mechanisms, that these standards are met. Like other national nuclear regulatory bodies, the AECB licenses facilities that use nuclear energy or nuclear material.

• (1600)

One way to illustrate the scope of the AECB's regulatory activities is to note that about 4,000 licences or other permits are currently in effect across Canada. These include licences for nuclear reactors, particle accelerators used in industrial and medical applications, uranium mines and refiners, reactor fuel fabrication plants, heavy water plants, radio active waste management facilities and radioisotopes. Radioisotopes are used for everything from medical and research applications to oil and gas well investigations and in consumer products like household smoke detectors. In fact, radioisotopes account for about 90 per cent of AECB licences.

AECB licencees are found throughout Canada. They range from corporate giants like Ontario Hydro to small companies providing inspection services to the industry, to private individuals operating out of—

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Bellehumeur:** Mr. Speaker, I am sorry to interrupt the member again, but it is once again about quorum. The Liberals are absent from the House. It is not only up to the members of the Bloc to listen—

**Mr. McTeague:** Mr. Speaker, I am very disappointed in the position taken by the Bloc members in calling a third time for a quorum count.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Milliken):** There must be a quorum in the House. As I do not see one, I ask the following: Call in the members.

[*English*]

*And the bells having rung:*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Milliken):** I see a quorum. Resuming debate, the hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources.

**Mrs. Cowling:** Thank you again, Mr. Speaker.

In administering its licensing system, the AECB works closely with other federal and provincial departments with responsibilities in such areas as health, the environment, transport and labour. This ensures that the concerns and legislative obligations of these departments are considered during the licensing process.

The Atomic Energy Control Board is also responsible for regulating the import and export of nuclear materials, equipment and technology. The board is very active in the work of the International Atomic Energy Agency and ensures Canadian compliance with the treaty on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons.

• (1605)

In the latter task the AECB is concerned with both domestic and international security of nuclear materials and technology. In all its regulatory and licensing activities the AECB maintains a transparent approach. I believe that the board's responsiveness to public concerns has much to do with its reputation as an effective, responsible, independent regulatory body. However, more than ever before the public is concerned about health and safety issues and demands input into the AECB's decision making process.

The Atomic Energy Control Act gives the AECB significant responsibilities and broad scope for regulating nuclear activities. Through periodic amendments to regulations and licensing conditions, the AECB has regulated the development of the nuclear industry in Canada effectively while ensuring the health and safety of workers, the public and the environment.

*Government Orders*

Nevertheless there is an obvious and compelling need to modernize the legislation. Many people believe that the 50 year old statute as it now stands limits the AECB's effectiveness. The act's deficiencies have been noted by the courts, the media, special interest groups, parliamentary committees and the auditor general.

Let me mention some of the more troubling weaknesses. AECB inspectors do not have the formal powers they need to carry out their responsibilities. The AECB cannot hold polluters financially accountable for their actions, nor can it order remedial action. The ceiling on fines is \$10,000 and is far too low.

The small number of board members hinders the decision making process and does not allow the agency the flexibility it needs to deal effectively with certain issues. The act does not provide explicitly for public hearings.

Bill C-23 corrects each of these weaknesses. It formalizes inspectors' powers so that they can ensure the safe use of nuclear materials whether in a home based business or a nuclear power plant. The bill provides an appeal mechanism as well. Bill C-23 also increases the maximum fine for violations to \$1 million.

The proposed legislation will enable the AECB under its new name, the Canadian nuclear safety commission, to act quickly to clean up radioactive contamination when concerns over liability or the polluter's inaction could cause delays that could threaten public health, safety or the environment. The legislation also sets up reporting requirements that ensure that any contamination by radioactive substances or possible exposures to radiation are reported to the commission for remedial action.

Bill C-23 increases the number of commission members to ensure better professional and technical representation and to improve decision making. It allows the president to appoint members to sit on panels which will be more efficient in many cases than requiring decision making by the full commission. This legislation also requires the commission to conduct its proceedings in public wherever reasonable. This simply formalizes current practice by the AECB.

Make no mistake, the AECB has been and continues to be an active, effective regulatory agency essential to the high technology industry. Hon. members must recognize that new legislation is required to ensure that Canada's nuclear regulatory agency has the appropriate mandate and the authority to carry out its responsibilities today and in the future.

This proposed legislation acts on commitments made in the recent speech from the throne, commitments to sustaining our environment and to ensuring a modern regulatory regime suitable for the 21st century.

I urge my hon. colleagues to act in the interest of all Canadians by voting in favour of this bill.

[Translation]

**Mr. Michel Bellehumeur (Berthier—Montcalm, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I move:

That the hon. member for Rimouski—Témiscouata be now heard.

• (1610)

[English]

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Milliken):** The hon. member has moved a motion to recognize the hon. member for Rimouski—Témiscouata. I was on my feet to recognize the member. I am happy to recognize the hon. member for Rimouski—Témiscouata.

The Chair had not made a choice and so I submit that the motion the hon. member has proposed is premature. Normally a motion that someone be heard is proposed after the Chair has recognized someone else. Since the Chair had not recognize anyone, I am happy to recognize the hon. member for Rimouski—Témiscouata.

[Translation]

**Mrs. Suzanne Tremblay (Rimouski—Témiscouata, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, before being heard, given the mood in the House today, I would like to be certain that there are truly no members opposed, and I call for a recorded division.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Milliken):** Does the hon. member for Rimouski—Témiscouata wish to continue her speech? There is no motion before the House except the motion for third reading.

If she wishes to speak to this motion for third reading, she is now welcome to do so, but if she has finished, we will resume debate.

**Mr. René Canuel (Matapédia—Matane, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak to Bill C-23. We got involved in the production of nuclear energy without being in a position to ensure the consequences properly.

We got involved in the development and production of nuclear energy without really knowing all the ins and outs of it. For years, we have been producing tons of nuclear waste without being able to handle that waste properly.

Our governments have not been equipped to properly manage the hazards to public health, and to the environment in particular. Our governments have been particularly incapable of proper monitoring, as we are well aware.

It is, therefore, not surprising that every time there is an attempt to develop or use a new nuclear technology, environmental organizations and the general public are up in arms. As you are aware, there is a lot of fear among the public.

*Government Orders*

We must not close our eyes, either, to the fact that the current arsenal of nuclear weapons in circulation on this planet represents a risk of totally annihilating the human race, and the public is very much aware of this.

We all know that there are impressive quantities of nuclear weapons, plutonium and heavy water in Russia, and our governments fear a black market may develop. Non-democratic countries and terrorist groups might get their hands on atomic weapons or on the raw materials for producing such weapons. Even small countries can get them.

I see Bill C-23 as only a tiny step toward enhanced government control, and one that is way too late in coming. It is a very tiny response to the justified fear of the public, of Quebecers in particular.

This bill does not, in fact, solve anything much. In particular, it does not get to the heart of the problem.

• (1615)

Will we really be better protected when this bill is passed? Hardly. What is this government doing to prevent the use of nuclear products in weapons of destruction? I do not think Bill C-23 provides the answer to this question.

As citizens we may well wonder whether this government realizes that mankind is living on top of a volcano. The existing legislation, which goes back to 1946, maintained an almost incestuous relationship between research, marketing and control. There was a genuine conflict of interest.

Fortunately, the bill proposes to separate the two components. How could anyone expect those who develop new technologies and are supposed to market them to exercise effective and much needed controls?

It is like asking the big oil companies to calibrate gas pumps. Not that I do not trust them, but I have very little doubt they would try to take advantage of the situation. So it took the federal government 50 years to realize that this legislation was ill conceived and did not satisfactorily protect the interests of Quebecers and Canadians.

How can you expect the public, which has many fears about nuclear energy, to start trusting this government and the new nuclear safety commission? This public trust will be extremely difficult to rebuild, and I can hardly believe that, with the passage of this bill, all problems will disappear.

In fact, I expect the government wants us to forget the latest visit of the Prime Minister to Russia, when there was some talk of purchasing nuclear waste and processing it here in Canada. At the time, this decision raised a wave of public protest.

There is another matter the government probably could have dealt with as well by examining the question of nuclear energy and

introducing a bill on the subject. All things considered, if we analyse research and development investments in the nuclear energy sector in Canada, it is clear that one province alone enjoys practically all the economic spinoffs in this sector. I am of course referring to the province of Ontario.

Who else in confederation is as well endowed with the largesse of the federal government? Who else in this confederation has a vested interest in maintaining Atomic Energy of Canada Limited? Who else in this confederation gets so many of the spinoffs of this industry? It is Ontario, always Ontario, that is the winner in the area of research and development.

If the government were half way serious, it would have used the opportunity to consider the question. In this area in particular, it could have extended its generosity to Quebec. It provides strong support for nuclear energy simply as a favour to the industry in Ontario, in my opinion.

I had hoped that the federal government would commit to better distribute its research and development funds by amending this bill. I am not saying give Quebec the advantage, but give it what it is entitled to. It did the very opposite. We saw this recently with the closing of the regional offices of Atomic Energy of Canada, including those in Montreal. They close the Montreal offices and open others in Ontario.

I would also have hoped that the government would make clear its desire for more research and development projects on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

• (1620)

Nuclear medicine has a very definite place, and funding should be increased to enable hospitals to do research. The public will accept atomic energy only when it sees its peaceful uses and its role in everyday life and only when it sees the government has established near perfect means to control the risks involved in its use and development.

The introduction of this bill in the House could also have raised the issue of funding for Atomic Energy of Canada for debate.

I would now like to discuss the funding of the sale of Candu reactors around the world. It is all very well to make sales, but do the countries receiving them have the means to protect themselves and their people? What about financing the sale of CANDU reactors throughout the world? Atomic Energy of Canada is just as much of a bottomless pit as the Hibernia project off Newfoundland may be.

Since this agency was created, billions of dollars have been sunk into it, and the government is only able to sell CANDU reactors by financing them with money from Canadian and Quebec taxpayers. In reality, the sale of CANDU reactors, with their supposedly safe technology, is nothing more than a clever way of subsidizing Atomic Energy of Canada.



*Government Orders*

This government would have done better to overhaul Atomic Energy of Canada's operations. The days when the government could squander taxpayers' money are long gone. When a government makes savage cuts to unemployment insurance, contemplates making cuts to old age pensions, and attacks the most disadvantaged members of society, it should start by cleaning up its own act.

The necessary clean-up has not been done at Atomic Energy Canada, and Bill C-23 would have provided an excellent opportunity to do just that. The timing was right. The government missed the boat in this case as in so many others. This is a half measure that will only disguise the true extent of the atomic energy management problem.

I think this bill comes too late. It is nevertheless worthwhile, except that it should have been better thought out. This is a bill that could have made a great many Canadians happy.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Milliken):** It is my duty, pursuant to Standing Order 38, to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the hon. member for Parry Sound—Muskoka—nuclear energy; the hon. member for Mackenzie—employment.

[*English*]

**Mr. Andy Mitchell (Parry Sound—Muskoka, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for Ontario.

I am very pleased to have an opportunity to speak on Bill C-23. As the chairman of the natural resources committee, I had an opportunity, along with many of my colleagues from all sides of the House, to study the bill in detail. A large number of witnesses came forward to provide us with a number of opinions, and concerns in some cases, about the bill.

I was pleased to see that during the report stage of this legislation that a number of changes were proposed by the government and were eventually incorporated into this bill.

• (1625)

I would like to take a moment to thank all of those people who took the time to testify before us as well as to thank my fellow members on the committee, many of whom are sitting here in the House right now, for the work that they did.

It is most important to recognize that this legislation is an attempt to find an appropriate balance. On the one hand it is an attempt to find a balance between ensuring the beneficial use of nuclear substances for the generation of power, medical research and medical technology, and on the other hand it is an attempt in putting in place a regulatory regime that ensures public safety and public health.

That is the balance that has to be found when dealing with the nuclear industry. Bill C-23 does just that. It gets that balance. It puts it in place and does it properly.

As some of the other speakers have mentioned previously in debate, this legislation is long overdue. The original legislation governing nuclear energy was passed in 1946. That is over 50 years ago. It was a time when the primary concern was one of national security, as opposed to one of public health and safety.

This legislation is long overdue and I applaud the Minister of Natural Resources for assuming the responsibility and after 50 some odd years bringing new legislation into the House that reflects the realities of the 1990s. Today we are far more concerned with the issues of health and safety than the concerns of national security.

As I mentioned in my opening comments, the bill looks to create a balance. I would like to quote clause 3 of the bill which deals with its purpose: "The purpose of this act is to provide for the development, production and use of nuclear energy and the production, possession and use of nuclear substances, prescribed equipment and prescribed information in a manner that prevents an unreasonable risk to national security, the environment or the health and safety of persons and is consistent with Canada's international obligations".

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Dalphond-Guiral:** Mr. Speaker, I am sorry to have to ask once again for a quorum. We might make it into the Guinness book of records.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Milliken):** We do not have a quorum at this point.

Call in the members.

*And the bells having stopped:*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Milliken):** There is now a quorum. The hon. member for Parry Sound—Muskoka has the floor.

[*English*]

**Mr. Mitchell:** Mr. Speaker, it is quite apparent the Bloc is trying to stretch this 50 year effort to finally update this bill to protect Canadians' health and safety with a few shenanigans, but I shall continue. Hopefully, we will get the concerns of Canadians through the House despite that.

• (1630)

As I was saying, there are a number of important objectives in this legislation. We have talked about the need to update the regulatory regime. We have talked about finding a balance.

As well, this bill gives the government the legislative authority to carry out its international obligations. Those international

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obligations are very important. For instance, it allows Canada to work toward the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and nuclear explosive devices. We have undertaken important international agreements to try to stop the spread of nuclear weapons in the world. This legislation provides the government the tools it will need to carry out those international agreements. That is another important objective of the bill.

Fourth, all government departments have worked on streamlining the regulatory regime under which Canadians must operate. This bill works toward that end. It works toward ensuring that the carrying out of regulations will be done in an efficient and cost effective manner. That is another important objective of the bill.

There are a number of specific provisions in the bill. I would like to speak to a couple of the provisions which will work toward achieving the objectives of the legislation.

First, the bill will expand the size of the commission from five members to seven members. That will allow more expertise, more representation on the commission, so that when decisions are being made there will be a broader group of individuals with a broader range of expertise. They will be able to make better and more effective decisions.

Second, the bill has increased the level of fines for individuals or corporations which contravene their licences. That is very important. By doing that we will get away from the situation where a company might consider a very minor fine to be simply the cost of doing business and will continue to not follow the rules and regulations. The bill will introduce fines which have real teeth in them. The increased fines will be an incentive to companies to adhere to the rules and regulations of their licences. I am very pleased that the legislation gives the government the power to establish fines at a level which will serve as a deterrent.

Third, in dealing with the regulatory regime, the bill will give the federal government the power to delegate administrative functions to the provinces where they are best able to carry them out. We will be able to get away from the situation where one day a provincial inspector shows up to do one part of the job and the next day a federal inspectors shows up to do another part. That system is very inefficient. This bill will allow the provinces to delegate administrative responsibilities.

Fourth and very important is the whole idea of having public hearings. One of the concerns that we heard during the committee meetings was that there would not be sufficient public input for some of the very important decisions which the commission will have to undertake. Through what was originally in the legislation and through the amendments that were made, based in part on the information we received at committee, the legislation has been changed so that there will be mandatory public hearings where people will be able to review decisions. There will also be an appeal process.

I believe this is a good piece of legislation. It demonstrates clearly that the Minister of Natural Resources, in coming into office and seeing a difficult problem, was able to act. She acted on a legislative regime that had not been updated for 50 years. The Minister of Natural Resources stepped up to the challenge and put before the House good, solid legislation.

This bill was not quickly put together. The committee held six weeks of hearings to gather opinions from a broad range of individuals and groups. We were able to obtain a large amount of input which was used to make the bill better than it was when it was debated in the House at second reading.

• (1635 )

This bill is about protecting the health and safety of Canadians. It is not about favouring one part of the country over another, about saying that Quebec gets all of this or Ontario gets all of this or the west gets all of this. That is not what this bill is all about, not what we in this House are about today.

It is about protecting Canadians' health and safety, about ensuring that we have a proper regulatory regime over the nuclear industry in this country, about making sure we protect the health and safety of Canadians.

I become quite fatigued when I hear on a bill that is as important as this, about the health and safety of Canadians, on a bill that deals with moving forward the agenda of protecting Canadians no matter where they live, comments about this part of the country getting more and that part of the country getting more. That has no place in this debate.

What this is about is a good piece of legislation, about protecting Canadians and making sure that the system works.

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Tremblay (Rimouski—Témiscouata, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, this afternoon there is a kind of comedy taking place in this House. Across the floor, there are 177 seats held by elected government members, but we cannot get enough of them to have a quorum. In the last hour, we have had to ask for a quorum five times. I am again asking for a quorum.

[*English*]

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Milliken):** There is not a quorum. Please ring the bells.

*And the bells having rung:*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Milliken):** I see a quorum. Questions and comments, the hon. member for Abitibi.

*Government Orders*

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Bernard Deshaies (Abitibi, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I have an interesting question for the Liberal member, who is also the chairman of the Standing Committee on Natural Resources. The hon. member said this is a very important bill for the health and safety of Canadians.

I asked the natural resources committee to amend clause 3, which reads:

The purpose of this Act is to provide for

(a) the limitation, to a reasonable level— of the risks— associated with the development, production and use of nuclear energy and the production, possession and use of nuclear substances, prescribed equipment, etc.

I would like the hon. member to tell me why he did not accept the amendment I proposed in committee. My amendment provided that the limitation should be not to a reasonable level, but to a minimum level. It is important for Canadians to understand that, when it comes to nuclear energy, the acceptable threshold should not really be the acceptable level, but that we should work to arrive at a minimum level. Given the current technology, this should be possible.

Could the hon. member tell me why he did not agree with this amendment, which sought to protect the well-being of Canadians?

[*English*]

**Mr. Mitchell:** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member worked very hard on this piece of legislation. We need to talk about finding a balance. I do not think that we can legislate every specific possibility that may come up at some time. If we look back to when the legislation was originally enacted in 1946 we will find things in the legislation which were not even imagined for 1996. That bill has had to serve over the last 50 years.

• (1640)

One integral part of the bill and of our regulatory regime is that we have a licensing board which stipulates on a case by case basis specific licenses established for each person to operate. The public should know that nobody handles this material in any form unless a licence has been issued to do so. Each situation is different. There is a big difference between a nuclear reactor and dealing with isotopes for medical research. Therefore there has to be some flexibility in the licensing regime.

When giving instructions to the commission to use the word reasonable, I believe that by using the word reasonable we are allowing the commission to deal with each situation given the events and the facts and the evolution of technology over the years and to give the flexibility necessary in the licensing process to deal with the health and safety of Canadians.

When trying to define a minimum standard when doing experimentation with isotopes it is going to be a whole lot different than a minimum standard for dealing with nuclear reactors or other types of licensees.

I believe that using the word reasonable and combining it with a strong board of seven members with some strong licensing powers and with some strong regulatory regimes with the ability to fine companies or individuals who ignore their licensing requirements will protect the health and safety of Canadians, which is the intent of the bill.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Dan McTeague (Ontario, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, given the atmosphere this afternoon, I must say that I find it a bit unfortunate that, as soon as the Bloc Quebecois members, the member for Berthier—Montcalm and the member for Rimouski—Témiscouata, raised their point of order, they left the House.

I find it a bit unfortunate that these members did not stay for a speech that is very important, on a topic that is also very important, not just for Quebecers but for all Canadians.

[*English*]

I am well aware of this bill. I think it is an important bill and it certainly affects me as a member of Parliament whose riding has one of the largest nuclear facilities in the country.

I want to commend the hon. member for Parry Sound—Muskoka on the excellent job done in committee and getting the bill to third reading. I also want to take the opportunity to thank the parliamentary secretary, the member for Dauphin—Swan River, and the minister on their excellent effort on a bill that I think modernizes our need for legislation and gets a brings a piece of legislation that has been around for a long time up to speed.

As hon. members are aware, the purpose of Bill C-23 is to establish a more effective and efficient regulatory framework for Canada's nuclear industry. The nuclear industry provides many benefits to Canadians but if Canadians are to realize those benefits the risk associated with nuclear energy must be minimized.

In addition, Canadians must be confident that a nuclear regulator is fully able to ensure those risks are controlled. Their legislation will establish a modern regulatory regime for Canada's nuclear industry so that Canadians can have that confidence.

• (1645)

There are costs to regulation, both in financial terms and in terms of constraints placed upon industry and individuals who work or deal with the industry. But there are benefits as well. To put this legislation into perspective I would like to remind hon. members of

*Government Orders*

this House of the nuclear sector's contribution to economic growth, job creation and a healthy environment for all Canadians.

Canada is a fortunate nation in the sense that it has a variety of electricity sources. Hydroelectric power is the major source, producing 60 per cent of our supply. Thermal electricity, generated mostly by burning natural gas and coal, produces about 20 per cent of the supply. Nearly 20 per cent is provided by nuclear power.

Nuclear power is certainly important in Ontario not only for the sake of my riding, but for the entire province where it produces more than 60 per cent of the electrical supply. It is probably not news to this House but nuclear power produced in Canada uses Candu nuclear reactors. In Canada we have 22 reactors of which eight are in my riding; one finds itself in the province of Quebec, and there is one in New Brunswick. They are all licensed and regulated by the AECB, the Atomic Energy Control Board of Canada.

The Candu reactor is a Canadian high technology success story. In 1987 the Engineering Centennial Council listed the Candu as one of the ten most outstanding engineering achievements of the preceding century.

One of the most attractive features of the Candu reactor is that it uses natural uranium as fuel. Other types of reactors use enriched uranium. Producing enriched uranium is an expensive process and the technology is a secret very closely guarded by a handful of countries. Therefore the Candu design allows us to capitalize on our abundant uranium resources.

Yet another attractive feature of the Candu reactor is that it can be refuelled on line. This has helped to make Candu reactors among the most reliable in the world. Canadians can take great pride in the fact that in terms of lifetime capacity utilization, three of the world's top ten reactors and seven of the world's top twenty-five reactors are Candu.

It is equally important to Canadian industry that the Candu design does not require large high pressure reactor vessels. This gives Canadian firms a great share in the manufacturing and construction of these reactors.

The technical excellence of the Candu has made it a desirable product for export. Four have been sold to South Korea, one to Argentina and one to Romania. On November 26 Atomic Energy of Canada Ltd. signed a contract to sell two Candu reactors to China. The nuclear industry is one of the few high tech industries that are actually net exporters of goods and services.

Nuclear energy and nuclear power are economical. The economies of scale associated with using nuclear power to generate electricity make it one of the lowest cost alternatives for meeting large base load demands.

During the 1970s and 1980s the cost of electricity from nuclear power plants in Ontario was on average about 30 per cent less than the cost of electricity from the more traditional conventional coal

fired power plants. Electricity provided by natural gas and coal fired generating plants has become more economically attractive in the past 10 years but the cost of nuclear power remains competitive for large scale base load generation under a number of scenarios. Canada's nuclear power plants will continue to provide clean economical power for the foreseeable future, and we hope that will be a long one.

Canada is a pioneer in the use of nuclear technology to support material science. Nuclear technologies also have applications in the oil and gas, metals inspection and agricultural industries, to name a few. Canada is the world's leading producer and exporter of uranium, but for peaceful purposes.

Canada's nuclear technology is literally saving lives here and around the world. This may come as a surprise to those who are usually quick to discredit it. For the past 50 years, Canada has been an international leader in medical applications of nuclear technology. In particular, our nation has become the world's leading producer of radioisotopes, which my hon. colleague from Parry Sound—Muskoka spoke so eloquently on.

In particular Canada has become the world's leading producer of such isotopes as cobalt 60 which is used to treat cancer and technetium 99 which is essential to many diagnostic procedures. Many people are amazed to learn that about 25 per cent of patients admitted to hospital in Canada today undergo a diagnostic process that involves nuclear technology.

• (1650)

In considering Bill C-23, hon. members must not overlook the fact that the Canadian nuclear industry is also a major employer. In 1993, the last year for which figures are available, the industry directly employed about 26,000 people. At least 10,000 jobs in other sectors depended indirectly on the nuclear industry. Many of these highly skilled scientific, engineering and manufacturing jobs can be seen right across this country, including the benefits which arise in my own riding.

Nuclear power represents more than just jobs, industrial growth and export potential. It is also one of the most important means by which Canada can achieve its sustainable development goals. Quite simply, the sustainable development of Canada's resources is essential to our international competitiveness and the long term health of our economy and of course the maintenance of our higher standard of living.

A key element of the sustainable development challenge is Canada's commitment to control its emissions of greenhouse and acid gases. Along with hydro power, nuclear energy is essential to this effort. Neither of these electricity sources produces greenhouse or acid gases. As a result of Canada's strong reliance on hydro and nuclear power, which by the way is uncommon among OECD countries, our electricity sector produces a smaller proportion of the country's total greenhouse gas emissions compared with other countries that depend on traditional fossil fuels. In fact if we decide

not to have nuclear reactors, our electricity sector would emit about twice as much as it does now.

I would like to emphasize that all the activities I have described today are regulated by the Atomic Energy Control Board to ensure that workers, the public and the environment are not exposed to unnecessary risks. The AECB has ensured that these risks are very low indeed. The benefits associated with nuclear technology far outweigh its risks.

The bill before us today addresses several concerns relating to the regulation of the industry. I draw the attention of hon. members to two key points. First, the industry has standards of regulation which it must meet. It needs to know what powers the regulator's inspectors have and it needs to have access to a legal appeal mechanism. Second, the Canadian public has a legitimate interest in nuclear safety. Bill C-23 gives Canadians an opportunity to express concerns whenever major facilities are being licensed.

It is for those reasons that Bill C-23 in my view is a bill well worth supporting. It is a bill whose time has come. For the residents of Pickering I think this makes absolute sense. I commend the government and the minister of energy in pursuing this.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Bernard Deshaies (Abitibi, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in this House to speak to Bill C-23 at third reading.

As my Liberal colleague mentioned, I have done considerable work on this bill. I thought that nuclear energy was a very serious matter, and that, since the old act had been around for 50 years, a great deal of attention would have to be given to improving it.

I would like to take this opportunity to explain my point of view, which is that Bill C-23 will have to be transparent so things can be put in context.

While the existing act encompasses both the regulatory and developmental aspects of nuclear activities, this enactment disconnects the two functions, provides a distinct identity to the regulatory agency. It replaces the Atomic Energy Control Board with the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission, underlining its separate role from that of Atomic Energy of Canada Ltd. The role of the latter agency is to promote the sale of CANDU reactors, among other things. It also oversees the federal research, development and marketing organization for nuclear and atomic energy.

Since the act was first adopted in 1946, the mandate of the regulatory agency has evolved from one chiefly concerned with national security to one which focuses primarily on the control of the health and environmental safety consequences of nuclear activities.

• (1655)

This enactment provides the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission with a mandate to establish and enforce national standards in

### *Government Orders*

this area. It also establishes a basis for implementing Canada's policy of fulfilling its obligations with respect to the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons.

This new philosophy underlying Bill C-23 establishes a very reasonable basis for attaining objectives, but perhaps not enough time has been allowed to take a 50-year-old enactment and turn it into a modern piece of legislation. It must be remembered that the bill replaces a 50-year-old enactment dealing primarily with national security. It must be kept in mind that in 1950, after World War II, there was more interest in linking nuclear energy with bombs for war time use. Gradually the desire developed to show Canadians that this energy could also be a safe, easily produced, low cost, clean energy source.

Mr. Speaker, there are not many of us here, and the House is not really paying much attention. In light of the events that have taken place, and in order to continue this debate in a more serious manner, I therefore move:

That the House do now adjourn.

[*English*]

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

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

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

**Some hon. members:** Yea.

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

**Some hon. members:** Nay.

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

*And more than five members having risen:*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Milliken):** Call in the members.

(The House divided on the motion, which was negated on the following division:)

(*Division No. 224*)

### YEAS

#### Members

Althouse	Asselin
Axworthy (Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing)	Bélisle
Bellehumeur	Bergeron
Bernier (Gaspé)	Brien
Canuel	Crête
Dalphond-Guiral	de Jong
de Savoye	Debien
Deshaies	Dubé
Dumas	Gagnon (Québec)

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Gauthier	Godin
Guimond	Langlois
Laurin	Leblanc (Longueuil)
Leroux (Richmond—Wolfe)	Leroux (Shefford)
Loubier	Marchand
Ménard	Mercier
Nunez	Paré
Pomerleau	Riis
Rocheleau	Sauvageau
Taylor	Tremblay (Lac-Saint-Jean)
Tremblay (Rimouski—Témiscouata)	Tremblay (Rosemont) —40

## NAYS

## Members

Alcock	Allmand
Anawak	Arseneault
Augustine	Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre/Sud-Centre)
Bakopanos	Beaumier
Bélair	Bélangier
Bernier (Beauce)	Bertrand
Bethel	Bevilacqua
Bodnar	Boudria
Brown (Oakville—Milton)	Brushett
Bryden	Caccia
Calder	Catterall
Chamberlain	Chan
Chrétien (Saint-Maurice)	Clancy
Cohen	Cowling
Crawford	Culbert
Cullen	De Villiers
Discepola	Duhamel
Dupuy	Easter
Eggleton	English
Finlay	Flis
Fontana	Gaffney
Gagliano	Galloway
Gerrard	Godfrey
Goodale	Graham
Grose	Guarnieri
Harb	Harvard
Hopkins	Hubbard
Jackson	Keyes
Kilger (Stormont—Dundas)	Kirkby
Knutson	Kraft Sloan
Lastewka	Lee
Lincoln	MacAulay
MacDonald	MacLellan (Cape/Cap-Breton—The Sydneys)
Maloney	Manley
Marleau	Massé
McCormick	McGuire
McKinnon	McTeague
McWhinney	Mifflin
Mitchell	Murphy
Murray	Nault
Nunziata	O'Brien (London—Middlesex)
Pagtakhan	Parrish
Peric	Peters
Peterson	Pettigrew
Pillitteri	Proud
Reed	Regan
Richardson	Robichaud
Rock	Shepherd
Sheridan	Skoke
Speller	Stewart (Brant)
Szabo	Telegdi
Terrana	Thalheimer
Ur	Valeri
Vanclief	Walker
Wappel	Wood
Zed—111	

## PAIRED MEMBERS

Assadourian	Bachand
Barnes	Bernier (Mégantic—Compton—Stanstead)
Campbell	Chrétien (Frontenac)
Duceppe	Fillion
Finestone	Harper (Churchill)
Lalonde	Landry
Lavigne (Beauharnois—Salaberry)	LeBlanc (Cape/Cap-Breton Highlands—Canso)
Lefebvre	Martin (LaSalle—Émard)
Patry	Picard (Drummond)
Robillard	St. Denis
Venne	Whelan

## [Translation]

**The Deputy Speaker:** I declare the motion lost.

\* \* \*

## [English]

## CANADIAN FOOD INSPECTION AGENCY ACT

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-60, an act to establish the Canadian Food Inspection Agency and to repeal and amend other acts as a consequence, be read the third time and passed.

**The Deputy Speaker:** It being 5.40 p.m., the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion at third reading stage of Bill C-60.

(The House divided on the motion, which was agreed to on the following division:)

(Division No. 225)

## YEAS

## Members

Alcock	Allmand
Anawak	Arseneault
Augustine	Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre/Sud-Centre)
Bakopanos	Beaumier
Bélair	Bélangier
Bernier (Beauce)	Bertrand
Bethel	Bevilacqua
Bodnar	Boudria
Brown (Oakville—Milton)	Brushett
Bryden	Caccia
Calder	Catterall
Chamberlain	Chan
Chrétien (Saint-Maurice)	Clancy
Cohen	Cowling
Crawford	Culbert
Cullen	De Villiers
Discepola	Duhamel
Dupuy	Easter
Eggleton	English
Finlay	Flis
Fontana	Gaffney
Gagliano	Galloway
Gerrard	Godfrey
Goodale	Graham
Grose	Guarnieri
Harb	Harvard
Hopkins	Hubbard
Irwin	Jackson
Keyes	Kilger (Stormont—Dundas)
Kirkby	Knutson
Kraft Sloan	Lastewka
Lee	Lincoln
MacAulay	MacDonald
MacLellan (Cape/Cap-Breton—The Sydneys)	Maloney
Manley	Marleau
Massé	McCormick
McGuire	McKinnon
McTeague	McWhinney

*Private Members' Business***PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS**

Mifflin  
Murphy  
Nault  
O'Brien (London—Middlesex)  
Parrish  
Peters  
Pettigrew  
Proud  
Regan  
Robichaud  
Shepherd  
Skoke  
Stewart (Brant)  
Telegdi  
Thalheimer  
Ur  
Vanclief  
Wappel  
Zed—113

Mitchell  
Murray  
Nunziata  
Pagtakhan  
Peric  
Peterson  
Pillitteri  
Reed  
Richardson  
Rock  
Sheridan  
Speller  
Szabo  
Terrana  
Torsney  
Valeri  
Walker  
Wood

[English]

**PUBLIC SAFETY OFFICERS COMPENSATION FUND****Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.) moved:**

That, in the opinion of this House, the government should consider the advisability of establishing a public safety officers compensation fund to receive gifts and bequests for the benefit of spouses and children of police officers and firefighters who lose their lives in the line of duty.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak to the House today on Motion No. 306.

As members know, I have been quite active in the area of private members' bills and motions. In part of the activities that I have undertaken the issue of alcohol was one that caught my attention the most. As a result of some of the work I did on Bill C-222, which concerned putting health warning labels on the containers of alcoholic beverages, a personal initiative came out of this called Drink Smart Canada.

Drink Smart Canada is a public awareness and education campaign to make Canadians aware of the consequences of the misuse of alcohol. When I started this program and did the research and developed the statistics to deal with the consequences of alcohol misuse, I needed some help. I received a lot of support from my colleagues in the House, but I needed some external support.

I would like to read into the record the statistics dealing with alcohol misuse: 19,000 deaths each year, 45 per cent of all motor vehicle collisions, 30 per cent of fires, 30 per cent of all suicides, 60 per cent of all homicides, 50 per cent of incidents of family violence, 65 per cent of snowmobile collisions, one in six family breakdowns, 30 per cent of all drownings, 5 per cent of birth defects, 65 per cent of cases of child abuse, 40 per cent of all falls and 50 per cent of all hospital emergencies. The cost of this to Canadians in additional health care costs and social program costs is some \$15 billion a year which is all directly or indirectly due to alcohol misuse.

When I look down the list at the tragedies associated with the misuse of alcohol, it became very clear to me that our police officers and firefighters are the ones who are acting on behalf of all Canadians to deal with the consequences of many of these tragedies. Whether they be fires, motor vehicle collisions, homicides or family violence, it is our police officers and firefighters who are there for Canadians during those times of emergency.

I needed that support and went outside and spoke with the police and firefighters. I am pleased to let everyone know that the

**NAYS**

## Members

Althouse  
Axworthy (Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing)  
Bellehumeur  
Bernier (Gaspé)  
Canuel  
Dalphond-Guiral  
de Savoie  
Deshaies  
Dumas  
Gauthier  
Guimond  
Laurin  
Leroux (Richmond—Wolfe)  
Loubier  
Ménard  
Nunez  
Pomerleau  
Rocheleau  
Taylor  
Tremblay (Rimouski—Témiscouata)

Asselin  
Bélisle  
Bergeron  
Brien  
Crête  
de Jong  
Debien  
Dubé  
Gagnon (Québec)  
Godin  
Langlois  
Leblanc (Longueuil)  
Leroux (Shefford)  
Marchand  
Mercier  
Paré  
Riis  
Sauvageau  
Tremblay (Lac-Saint-Jean)  
Tremblay (Rosemont) —40

**PAIRED MEMBERS**

Assadourian  
Barnes  
Campbell  
Duceppe  
Finestone  
Lalonde  
Lavigne (Beauharnois—Salaberry)  
Lefebvre  
Patry  
Robillard  
Venne

Bachand  
Bernier (Mégantic—Compton—Stanstead)  
Chrétien (Frontenac)  
Fillion  
Harper (Churchill)  
Landry  
LeBlanc (Cape/Cap-Breton Highlands—Canso)  
Martin (LaSalle—Émard)  
Picard (Drummond)  
St. Denis  
Whelan

[Translation]

**The Deputy Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

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

[English]

**The Deputy Speaker:** It being 5.45 p.m., the House will now proceed to the consideration of Private Members' Business as listed on today's Order Paper.

*Private Members' Business*

Association of Fire Chiefs representing the firefighters of Canada came forward and lent their support to Drink Smart Canada.

• (1750)

In its supporting statement on Drink Smart the The Canadian Police Association stated it was pleased to join the Canadian Association of Fire Chiefs in supporting Drink Smart Canada.

The Canadian Police Association welcomes any initiative that will curb alcohol abuse and make our communities and roads safer for all Canadians. Police officers know too well the carnage and grief that is caused by alcohol abuse. We recognize that alcohol will not be eradicated from society but that it can be used responsibly and this type of program will be effective in reducing family violence and needless traffic deaths and injuries.

In its statement the Canadian Association of Fire Chiefs said:

We are indeed honoured to be named as one of the honorary patrons of "Drink Smart Canada" and to work along with the Canadian Police Association and Members of Parliament on this educational project.

The fire departments across Canada are involved daily in incidents such as house fires and motor vehicle accidents whose cause can be attributed either directly or indirectly to alcohol abuse. The consumption of alcohol can impair judgment and cause drowsiness, which when combined with routine domestic activities, cigarette smoking or driving a motor vehicle can have serious if not tragic consequences.

Those are just two extracts from these two organizations.

When I needed help the police and firefighters of Canada came forward to offer their support and encouragement in an area that was important to me. As a consequence I have no hesitation whatsoever in bringing forward Motion No. 306 which proposes:

That, in the opinion of this House, the government should consider the advisability of establishing a Public Safety Officers compensation fund to receive gifts and bequests for the benefit of spouses and children of police officers and firefighters who lose their lives in the line of duty.

I submitted that private member's motion. In addition, on June 17, 1996 I also submitted Bill C-314 which is a bill to bring to fruition the public safety officers compensation fund. That bill has not yet been chosen under the rules of the House but I am confident that today will start the debate on this issue and that with the support of all members of the House we will achieve the objectives of Bill C-314.

I want to say a couple of words about the memorial site on the Hill. The murder of a police officer triggered a nationally recognized ceremony. On July 11, 1977 a rookie constable, David Kirkwood, was killed in the line of duty. He had been with the force for some 11 months and was 21 years old. Following that senseless killing Ottawa police officers vowed to keep not only his memory alive but as well to ensure that the magnitude of his sacrifice and

the sacrifice of others like him would never be forgotten by Canadians.

Accordingly, on September 24, 1978 a special service and tribute were held on Parliament Hill. The site selected was Parliament, the place where the laws are made that directly have an impact on police officer safety and on the quality of life of us all.

On March 22, 1994 the Prime Minister gathered with more than 700 police officers and relatives of slain officers at the site behind the Parliament buildings. The Canadian Police Association and the CACP dedicated the new Canadian Police Memorial Pavilion and a granite stone at the base of the pavilion that contains the names of officers killed in the line of duty.

During the last 30 years some 96 Canadian police officers have been the victims of homicide while on duty. All but eight of these were shot. On duty homicide rates, however, have declined somewhat during this period but it still is a large number.

• (1755)

At the time of the writing of the article I am reading here, 14 officers had been killed during the 1990s. A research study has been done of four large police forces which represent one-third of all sworn officers in the country. It found that during the period 1970 through 1990 two-thirds of police officer homicides occurred after police were dispatched to incidents or responded to calls for assistance while the remaining homicides arose out of police initiated contact. The majority of these were in responding to emergent needs.

I have read many of the stories associated with the deaths of courageous firefighters. I will not repeat them on the record because I think it is important to remember the positives and not the tragic stories. We should not forget those stories but remember the positives.

Firefighters have made a significant contribution to public safety. Over the last 10 years approximately 40 firefighters have lost their lives in the line of duty on behalf of Canadians. These include not only the firefighters we are all familiar with but in many communities across Canada there is a volunteer firefighter base that is very important to the safety of all Canadians.

To give an idea of the magnitude of the contribution made there as well in terms of risk, over the same period some 12,500 firefighters have been injured. I have looked at the statistics and found that firefighters and police officers were four times more likely to be the victims of homicide and 11 times more likely to be the victims of violence. That tells us that our police officers, our public safety officers, prison guards, jail guards and firefighters are in a high risk, dangerous situation.



This motion asks parliamentarians to consider what they feel when they see incidents in our country when public safety officers lose their lives in the line of duty. I can recall many times seeing news stories of police officers or firefighters from right across the country, hundreds if not thousands, coming together to mourn a loss. It is a loss that Canadians feel as well.

Public safety officers are police officers, firefighters, peace officers. Under the Criminal Code peace officers include jail and prison guards. The intent here is to include those who are in the public service.

Motion No. 306 and Bill C-314 proposes that a registered charitable foundation be established with a board of directors appointed by the Government of Canada. The board would receive applications for assistance and would assess need on a case by case basis.

On September 29, 1976 a public safety officers benefit program was established in the United States. It is now under the auspices of the U.S. department of justice. It provides a substantial benefit to the survivors of firefighters and police officers killed in the line of duty. In fact, the amount currently paid is about \$135,000 U.S. dollars. It is also an indexed fund. That gives an idea of the value and the level of concern that the United States has for those who provide these services to the citizens of the United States.

When a program begins it is not possible to fund it at that level. However, it is reflective of the level of concern.

A fund is being proposed which would be a registered charity to receive gifts and bequests from Canadians who want a tangible way to show their support for our police officers, firefighters and peace officers who lose their lives in the line of duty. The board of directors would assess each case on a case by case basis and would determine on the basis of need.

• (1800)

I found an interesting statistic. The average age of police officers killed in the line of duty is about 35. I do not have statistics on what their family composition was but I can reflect on what my family composition was some 14 years ago when I was 35 years of age.

I had an eight-year old, a six-year old and a one-year old. My wife was at home managing the family home and caring for our children and our family. We had a large mortgage. We had an old car. I had a job that offered group life insurance which would pay twice my salary if I should die. It was certainly not enough to discharge my debts. I had some additional insurance which was expensive but I carried it because of my family responsibilities.

If I am reflective of the kind of situations, and I am sure I am, that police officers and firefighters who are in the prime of their lives find themselves in, their families are probably filled but very

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young, their financial obligations are probably at their peak and they are probably getting into their highest income earning years when their lives come to an end.

The money would come from gifts or bequests from Canadians or from their estates in gratitude for the service provided, and that would be a major source of funds, and the unions and the associations of the police officers and firefighters across this country have let me know by literally hundreds of letters and petitions that they support this issue and that they are also prepared to support it financially.

The motion does not call for funding from other levels of government. However, as a registered charity it can receive any appropriations from any level of government should that happen, and I hope that would happen.

The last question I would rhetorically pose is why is the fund being proposed. Canadians are well aware of the daily risks that face our police and firefighters as they serve our needs. When one of them loses their life in the line of duty, we all mourn that loss. This fund would be a tangible way for Canadians to honour their courageous service and to assist their loved ones in their time of need.

The International Association of Firefighters comes annually to visit the Hill. I want to thank firefighter Marty Goodkey who came to my office last year to propose this public safety officers compensation fund on behalf of all public safety officers, including police, prison guards, firefighters and volunteers across this country. They made a tremendous impression on me. I was very grateful for the support they gave me when I asked them for support for Drink Smart Canada. It is the least I can do to rise in this House and to ask for the support of all colleagues to see if we can find a way to help establish a public safety officers compensation fund so that we can give all Canadians an opportunity to show how much we care and appreciate the contribution made by those public safety officers.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. François Langlois (Bellechasse, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to speak to Motion M-306, presented by the hon. member for Mississauga South.

Although the hon. member already mentioned the following, we must give credit where credit is due. As far as the business of Parliament is concerned, which includes bills and motions, the hon. member for Mississauga South has, in the course of this Parliament, introduced a number of bills. He has done an outstanding job, whether or not we agree with the motions and bills he drafted and so valiantly defended before the Subcommittee on Private Members' Business of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs.

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It is always reassuring to see a member who works so hard at the business of Parliament, something we were all elected to do.

The debate on the motion of the hon. member for Mississauga South is right on time, since next Monday in Ottawa there will be a meeting of the Canadian Police Association, whose members will take advantage of this opportunity next week to meet parliamentarians, make them aware of their problems and try to determine certain priorities for dealing with matters of public safety.

• (1805)

This contribution by the Canadian Police Association is much appreciated, for instance, by the Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs on which I have had the honour to sit since the beginning of the 35th Parliament. Every time we had bills concerning the Criminal Code and public safety, the Canadian Police Association usually appeared with thorough and informed studies and shared its expertise acquired in the field.

For that reason alone, we as legislators owe a debt of gratitude to the Canadian Police Association. They helped us improve certain bills and in many cases prompted the tabling of bills aimed at increasing public safety.

As parliamentarians we are, of course, concerned about public safety, and we pass legislation accordingly. However, we too often forget those who are on the front line, and to take a leaf from the book of the hon. member for Mississauga South, I will talk about those who are on the firing line and mention a few figures. It is said dozens of police officers have been shot. These are not traffic accidents, this is murder, sordid crimes, in most cases.

It is always a shock to a community to see police officers die in the line of duty, specially when it is the result of a criminal act. Those who are supposed to protect us also deserve to be protected by a legislative framework that shows respect for the work done by the men and women who serve society and provides adequate compensation for their families in case of death.

The hon. member for Mississauga South was right when he said that when a person dies in the prime of life, that person is usually not in a position to provide his family with the same standard of living he was able to provide during his lifetime.

Motion M-306 suggests establishing a fund that would not be a government fund but would collect donations from all parts of Canada and even outside the country. When tragedies occur, or even when a police officer dies, some people want to make a contribution to charity. This would be an excellent way to encourage Canadians to make contributions in the name of police officers and, of course, firefighters. They could do so for peace officers in general, even for crossing guards, who often more anonymously

put their lives on the line to protect society's youngest members, our children.

So, we will certainly not oppose a central fund such as this. I see it as a progressive measure that will make more money available for victims.

Our society too often tends to forget the victims, not only the murder victims, but the survivors who must mourn a loss and live with the financial consequences of a criminal act.

I think a central fund for contributions would be a modest gesture on our part. It would of course be given the tax protection afforded by the Income Tax Act for registered charities. We would have not only a basic instrument, but the means to provide economic security to the bereaved families of public safety officers, too many of whom lose their lives in the line of duty, because obviously we cannot bring back the person.

• (1810)

Finally, since it is a sort of collective bereavement, where society mourns the death of those representing public order, I think everyone would feel the better for it.

So, on behalf of the official opposition, I am pleased to support Motion No. 306 tabled by the hon. member for Mississauga South.

[*English*]

**Mr. Andrew Telegdi (Waterloo, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise on Motion No. 306.

Prior to coming to this House I had the occasion to work closely with police officers in my work with Youth in Conflict with the Law. As well, when I was on Waterloo city council I had the occasion to work with firefighters in my community in Waterloo. Now, as a member of Parliament, I have in my constituency firefighters from the city of Kitchener as well as volunteer firefighters from Woolwich Township. They are one of the finest groups I have the honour and privilege of knowing.

As well, these people are on duty 24 hours a day. Be it Christmas, New Year or any other holiday, we know that firefighters, the police officers and other emergency workers are at work while the rest of us are enjoying festivities.

In many cases police officers are the only social workers, if you will, available after hours. It is quite humorous because the old line police officers did not see themselves as social workers. That is what they are and that is what they have done. These people represent a very real safety net in the case of emergency in our community.

When I was on city council I used to joke with the firefighters. I told them that they were one group of people who worked for the city whom I did not want to see work and I hoped they had no work to do. The fact is when that alarm bell rings and the call comes in,

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firefighters are quickly on the move to make their way to a fire or to respond to a three tier response, where any emergency might take place where life is threatened. That might be at the scene of an accident where they will go with the jaws of life, saving lives.

What impresses me about them is every time they go on one of those calls they put their life at risk. It was about four years ago that Captain Kieswetter went to a house fire in Kitchener and lost his life when he was overcome by smoke. He gave his life in terms of service to his community.

● (1815)

Back in the mid-eighties there was a fire at Horticultural Technologies. Many dangerous chemicals were part of the fire. The final decision has not yet come down, since it is before the courts, as to why six firefighters a few years later died of cancer or why the first police officer at the scene died of cancer. There is an inquiry investigating the circumstances of that fire.

We know that when those individuals respond they respond to very dangerous situations.

Oftentimes I walk to the back of the Parliament Buildings to look over the Ottawa River and Hull. Sometimes I stop by the monument which is dedicated to police officers and peace officers. There are hundreds of names of individuals on the monument who gave their lives in the line of duty, serving their fellow citizens and their communities.

What this motion addresses is the need for financial compensation to take care of the families and loved ones of the people who are on the front lines and who in the line of duty give their lives.

I applaud my colleague for introducing this motion. It is something which Canadians will support from coast to coast to coast.

I would like to read something into the record which I hear every time I attend a professional firefighters function in my community. This is the firefighters' prayer all across Canada:

When I am called to duty God,  
Whenever flames may rage,  
Give me the strength to save some life,  
Whatever be its age.

Help me embrace a little child,  
Before it is too late,  
Or to save an older person from  
The horror of that fate.

Enable me to be alert,  
And hear the weakest shout,  
And quickly and efficiently  
To put the fire out.

I want to fill my calling and  
To give the best in me,  
To guard my every neighbour and  
Protect his property.

And if according to Your will,  
It is time to end my life,  
Please bless with Your protecting hand  
My children and my wife.

In a very real way that is what this motion is meant to accomplish. I strongly endorse it and urge that we work toward making it a reality.

[Translation]

**Mr. Nick Discepola (Parliamentary Secretary to Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I too would like to speak this afternoon to the motion by the member for Mississauga South and state the official position of the government.

The member is proposing, as has been done before, that the government consider the advisability of establishing a compensation fund to receive gifts and bequests for the benefit of spouses and children of police officers and firefighters who lose their lives in the line of duty.

I have no doubt that the member moved the motion out of concern for the welfare of men and women who, as he said, protect and ensure the safety of all Canadians every day. I can ensure him that the government shares his concerns.

● (1820)

We are very aware of the vital role played by public safety officers in Canada as the first line of support and protection in crisis situations, such as fires, accidents and crimes. They perform these remarkable duties on behalf of each one of us, leaving Canadians with the calm certainty that there will always be assistance in case of difficulty.

At the federal level, as you are probably aware, we have recognized the importance of this issue within our federal police force, the RCMP, which reports to the federal government. As the member has also pointed out, the RCMP has a death benefit plan for the survivors of RCMP officers who lose their lives in the line of duty.

This is an example of the sort of concrete and relevant action this government has taken on behalf of the men and women in the RCMP.

In addition, the collective agreement of federal correctional services officers, who are also peace officers and who come under federal jurisdiction, provides a death benefit.

As well, there is a pension paid to the families of correctional officers who lose their lives in the line of duty, as there is for the RCMP. This also applies to customs officers, game wardens, and all other public servants who are federal peace officers.

What is more, every year, the government supports and contributes to the memorial service, organized by police officers for the most part and held on Parliament Hill, in honour of peace officers who have lost their lives in the line of duty. Last year was the 19th such commemoration. This shows, I feel, the importance Canadians attach to this annual event and their recognition of those who have served them as peace officers and have lost their lives while doing so. Initially organized in memory of police officers who lost their lives while on duty, this service, held every September, is

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now intended to honour the memory of all peace officers who have lost their lives in this way.

A memorial book containing the names of the deceased peace officers is generally on display in the East Block, but it is placed in the rotunda of the Centre Block on the day of the service.

[English]

Also in this regard, the government supported the construction of a memorial pavilion on Parliament Hill which symbolizes the appreciation of all Canadians for the sacrifices made by our peace officers from all jurisdictions who have been killed in the line of duty.

The Police Memorial Pavilion was dedicated by the Prime Minister on January 22, 1994, as was already stated, and is a permanent recognition of all police, corrections officers and peace officers in Canada who died, unfortunately, in the line of duty.

This commemoration in our capital city, next to one of our country's greatest symbols, is further testimony of the importance Canadians place on their safety and those who protect it.

At the heart of this issue is a matter of compensation for provincial and municipal police officers and for firefighters, which I understand varies greatly throughout the country.

Some jurisdictions have assistance for survivors but many do not. Public safety officers are high risk potential liabilities for insurance companies and affordable policies are often hard to find.

Many families of public safety officers suffer hardship when their family member dies doing his or her job. This is obviously a concern to these families, to our communities and to our government.

This motion is a laudable attempt to provide fair redress to families of public safety officers who died while attempting to keep Canada safe and secure. However, a review of the issue surrounding the motion indicates that there are several considerations that would have to be taken into account.

The basic premise on which the hon. member's motion is founded is a sound one. It appeals directly to our sense of wanting to do what is right and just in such circumstances for the families of those men and women who have dedicated their lives.

There are important questions surrounding the issues that must be asked and fully explored. While we all nod our heads in agreement about the worthiness of the hon. member's intentions, we need to address some fundamental issues that have a direct impact on this motion.

• (1825)

[Translation]

I would like to address the question of jurisdiction. In this connection, members of police forces other than the RCMP, and firefighters covered by the definition "public safety officer" also come under the jurisdiction of the provinces or municipalities. Consequently, the federal government cannot assume all responsibilities toward these officers on its own.

As I have said, the federal government already provides survivors benefits to the families of RCMP staff members who have lost their lives in the line of duty. We fully realize we have a moral obligation to ensure that all those who put their lives on the line, as well as their families, are not penalized as a result.

However, as we all know, in Canada there is a division of jurisdictions and responsibilities between municipalities, the provinces and the federal government. Many of the jurisdictions and responsibilities covered by the definition "public safety officer" are either provincial or municipal.

It is reasonable to expect the fund to be used to compensate the spouses and families of the deceased, and it is also very important to ensure that fair compensation is given where compensation is due. I would also like to say that the way the proposed fund is managed is something that would require further study.

As far as these questions are concerned: jurisdiction, management, financing and the advisability of establishing a public safety officers compensation fund, I would like to stress the need for prior consultations with firefighters, police officers and their local and provincial administrations. This would not only be prudent but also essential in determining the best way to deal with this question.

As these issues are discussed, perhaps other options could be considered as well. Here are a few examples: Is there a way to give peace officers better insurance coverage by going to the private sector? Should we take this opportunity to ask a private foundation to sponsor the fund or establish a new fund for this purpose? These are questions that could be further discussed with the private sector.

I repeat that the motion before the House today is a very praiseworthy attempt to make just amends. I know you will agree when I say that all of us, in fact all Canadians, are grateful to public safety officers for the services they provide every day in so many communities across the country.

However, the motion raises a number of questions that merit further study. In my capacity of Parliamentary Secretary to the Solicitor General, I recommend that the motion not be adopted until there has been further discussion, especially at the provincial level.

*Private Members' Business*

[English]

**Mr. Harold Culbert (Carleton—Charlotte, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am delighted and honoured to join in the debate this evening on this very important Motion No. 306, brought forward by my hon. colleague from Mississauga South. I want to congratulate the member for bringing this motion forward. As we heard from the parliamentary secretary, it is important to debate these issues, to discuss them, to bring them forward and to study if necessary but at the same time to take an action. That is what this motion is all about.

What does Motion No. 306 do and what would it accomplish? Those are important questions that we might all ask ourselves.

First of all, it is intended to set up a registered charitable foundation to be established with a board of directors, possibly appointed by the Government of Canada. Subsequently the board would receive applications for assistance and assess the need case by case.

Who would it involve? It would certainly involve the opportunity for various peace officers, those employed or involved in voluntary firefighting. Under the Criminal Code peace officer includes police officers and jail and prison guards.

• (1830)

Having been involved for over 15 years in municipal government, I had the occasion to work with the police and fire departments on an ongoing basis. In my constituency which is more rural with a number of municipalities, we have a number of volunteer fire departments. Fires occur in those smaller towns, villages, communities and rural areas.

Each time the firefighters are called out there is a risk to them. Does that stop them from volunteering their time, talent and energy? No, it does not. They are still prepared to be volunteers because they see the need in the community for helping their fellow human beings. Whether it be a life and death situation or property damage, they are prepared to go and do their part.

Anyone who has personally experienced a fire in their home will agree it is quite a scare to be called from a meeting to be told: "Your house is on fire. You had better follow the fire truck because it is going to your home". It is a terrible feeling. I experienced that once.

I was the mayor of my municipality at the time, which the parliamentary secretary can appreciate. I was chairing a meeting when I was called and told: "There is a fire at your home. We just got the call". The furnace had blown up. By the time I had arrived, the fire truck was there and the firemen were doing their jobs. It is scary to see a red hot furnace chimney with the sparks literally coming from it.

I have a great deal of respect for firemen, especially those who volunteer their time and energy. Just to finish the story so I will not leave members in suspense, my home was saved. There was a tremendous amount of smoke damage but there were no injuries. The point I am trying to make is that it was due to the prompt and efficient attention of those firefighters who were there and I will never forget it.

Most of us would be lost and would not know the right thing to do in those situations. We would not have the coolness under the stress of those situations. But those firefighters just took it in hand as if it were an ordinary everyday thing. Of course for them and with their training and dedication, it was.

I have a great deal of respect for Motion No. 306 which has been brought forward. What might it do for those who would have lost their lives or what might it do for their families that are left behind, their children and their spouses?

We all know that the cost of education has increased over the years. In those situations where the lives of firefighters, police officers, jail guards and prison guards have been snuffed out just like that, the intent is to have a fund set up to receive bequests and donations.

It is not something the taxpayer would be burdened with but would be a fund to receive donations from those who have received assistance, like myself. For example, because of the tremendous service I received, I might want to donate to such a fund, not as a taxpayer but as a person who would like to make a donation or bequest. After receiving applications the board would decide the needs and the merits on a case by case basis.

• (1835)

That is what the motion is about. There will be no cost to the taxpayers, but there will be an opportunity to make bequests, donations or gifts which could assist the families of those dedicated persons who put their lives on the line day in and day out, night in and night out for Canadians. For us. It is an opportunity for us to set up a fund and a foundation so that we in turn may assist them.

I congratulate my colleague from Mississauga South for bringing this motion forward. I hope in the future the studies mentioned by the parliamentary secretary will be carried out. Then we might one day see the fund set up so that we can provide assistance when it is needed.

**Mr. Derek Lee (Scarborough—Rouge River, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to say a few words in support of Motion No. 306 from the member for Mississauga South. The motion calls upon the government to participate in establishing a foundation which would be self-funded, not funded by government, in a way that would provide some compensation at the time of death of a peace officer or firefighter.

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The concept is one whose time has come. Beyond all doubt, Canadians realize that we have a moral obligation to recognize the extremely valuable and sometimes very risky work done by police officers and firefighters on our behalf 24 hours a day. It is beyond debate. All parties have recognized that adequately in the House.

Some places in the country do have adequate compensation for widows and orphans, the survivors of the deceased, but some places do not. We have a spotty non-comprehensive system to provide this type of compensation.

The proposal would create a vehicle which would be the trustee of funds provided by gifts or legacies whereby compensation would be made. It does not require government management. The fund will be managed with its own resources by people selected by the foundation.

Is there a jurisdiction problem? Some members seem to think so, but I do not think so. I think jurisdiction is being used as a reason for further study. I do not think jurisdiction is a problem here any more than it was a problem when Parliament set up the Canadian Race Relations Foundation. In that case an arms length foundation was set up. We gave it \$10 million of taxpayers' money and said: "Here. You are on your own. Go do your job. Here is what you do. Report to us annually. Do a good job for Canadians".

In this case there will not be a nickel of taxpayers' money. We are simply providing the vehicle. I do not quite understand how this could be a jurisdictional problem. Maybe someday we will see through the fog.

This particular initiative signals a need for leadership to put in place a vehicle which is necessary. It is a need which has been recognized by groups and organizations that represent our peace officers and firefighters. For those who choose to serve the public in the way that peace officers and firefighters do in accepting the risks that are there, we can do no less than to encourage and participate in the effort.

• (1840)

Although something concrete may not follow from this particular effort in the House this evening and the valuable contribution by the member for Mississauga South, I am hopeful that creative ways can be found, that the leadership can be found in and around this capital. I am sure there are ways to do this with or without the participation of the government.

I am fairly certain that no matter what happens, any initiative that evolves will have the support and encouragement of the government. I intend to work with those who will continue to look to find a way to make this happen.

**Mr. Guy H. Arseneault (Parliamentary Secretary to Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.):** Mr.

Speaker, I know that time is running out but I would like to also lend my support to the motion of the hon. member today.

To all of the firefighters, police officers and peace officers who have active duty in my region of Restigouche—Chaleur and the region of the Madawaska, I would like to lend my support. I would like to reiterate why the fund is being proposed.

Canadians are well aware of the daily risks that face our police and firefighters as they serve our emergency needs. When one of them loses their life in the line of duty, all of us mourn their loss. This fund will be a tangible way for Canadians and parliamentarians to honour their courageous service and assist their loved ones in their time of need.

Likewise, like other members, I do not foresee that this would be a burden on the taxpayer. This would be a voluntary fund that would be set up and administered outside of government. It would be voluntary and it would not be a cost to the taxpayer.

I would also like to lend my support to this motion. The time has come.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The proposer of the motion is entitled to sum up. He has two minutes.

**Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this is not a votable motion. I want the police officers, firefighters, the police association and fire chiefs to know that in talking to my colleagues in the House I would say there is virtually unanimous support for pursuing this concept of a fund to assist the families of those public safety officers who lose their lives in the line of duty. It is going to take a bit of work but I think very slowly and even tonight I have heard of some opportunities and we may be able to move this forward even further.

Members here have been very kind. I know they are sincere in the gratitude on behalf of their constituents and indeed on behalf of all Canadians that we extend not only to those police officers, firefighters and peace officers, but also to their families. I am sure it is very difficult for all of us to appreciate what it must mean to a family knowing that their loved one is out there at a high risk scenario and that one day tragedy may occur because it is part of the job.

It is a unique situation. We know tragic circumstances occur. We want to say now to all of them, thank you for your courageous service. We will not forget those who have lost their lives in the line of duty on behalf of the Canadian people. Thank you very much.

I hope that one day soon this matter will come back before the House with the specifics and we can have that public safety officers compensation fund established in Canada by the Parliament of Canada for the people of Canada on behalf of public safety officers.

*Adjournment Debate*

[Translation]

**The Deputy Speaker:** The time provided for the consideration of Private Members' Business has now expired, and this item is dropped from the Order Paper.

**ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS**

• (1845)

[English]

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 deemed to have been moved.

## NUCLEAR ENERGY

**Mr. Andy Mitchell (Parry Sound—Muskoka, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, further to my question, the issue of nuclear safety in Canada comes up again and again.

In her response, the Minister of Natural Resources reminded us that Canada has a lengthy history in terms of advocating the destruction of nuclear weapons and that all nuclear activity in Canada is conducted only after the most stringent safety and security measures are put into place.

As Chair of the natural resources committee, I studied clause by clause the nuclear legislation that is currently before the House. As a result, I have a true appreciation for the complex issues that surround nuclear safety in this country.

Moreover, I have a true appreciation for the concerns of my constituents and other Canadians who, while acknowledging the contribution of nuclear power to meet our energy needs, insist, and rightly so, that nuclear activity in Canada be undertaken only while adhering to the strictest environmental standards.

I recently met with several concerned individuals in my riding who were members of an organization devoted to maintaining high standards in nuclear safety.

Like these individuals and others like them, I am committed to protecting Canada's environment and natural resources. Our federal government has an ongoing commitment to environmental protection in Canada and has advanced this cause considerably since the original Canadian Environmental Protection Act took effect in 1988.

We know that some toxic substances do not break down naturally but stay in our food, water and soil and accumulate over time. To better protect the environment and the health of Canadians from these toxins, we introduced a new act in December 1996 to manage toxic substances more effectively, improve the application of regulation and encourage public participation and co-operation between governments.

The bottom line is that it is better to prevent pollution than to try to manage it after it has been created. It is this same principle that

guides the nuclear safety legislation which establishes the Canadian nuclear safety commission and contains measures that protect the environment.

This nuclear safety legislation replaces the Atomic Energy Control Act with a modern statute to provide for more explicit and effective regulations of nuclear energy.

Formulation of the Canadian nuclear safety commission underlies its separate role from research, development and marketing, and recognizes that since the original act was first adopted in 1946 the mandate of the regulatory agency has evolved from one of primarily national security to one primarily focused on the control of health, safety and environmental consequences of nuclear activities.

This legislation provides the Canadian nuclear safety commission with a mandate to establish and enforce national standards in these areas. It also establishes a basis for implementing Canadian policy and fulfilling Canada's obligation with respect to the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons.

The legislation brings the enforcement powers of compliance and penalties for infractions into line with current legislative practices. The commission is empowered to require financial guarantees to order remedial action in hazardous situations and to require responsible parties to bear the cost of decontamination, all measures that will help protect the environment.

The constituents in my riding care about their environment. Canadians care and so does this Liberal government. On behalf of my constituents, I would appreciate that the parliamentary secretary further address these issues.

**Mrs. Marlene Cowling (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I want to reassure the hon. member and all Canadians that before any full scale project involving the Bruce reactors could proceed, it would be subject to a full assessment and licensing approval of relevant federal and provincial safety, health and environmental regulatory authorities.

The approval process would include provisions for public input. If the requirements for public health and safety could not be met a MOX fuel project involving Canadian based CANDU reactors would not proceed.

Let me emphasize why Canada supports in principle the MOX fuel initiative. Weapons usable plutonium in Russia and the United States could present a clear danger because it can be remade into nuclear weapons.

• (1850)

The use of MOX fuel in power reactors for the generation of electricity would represent a tangible contribution to world peace and security.

Some may ask why the U.S. does not use MOX fuel in its own reactors. The U.S. has included its own light water reactors as well as Canadian based CANDU reactors in its final list of options. It has included CANDU reactors in its final list because it offers the

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possibility of the disposing of both Russian and U.S. plutonium in symmetry in a trusted third country.

AECL has tested fuel at its labs over the last 30 years. The MOX fuel performance test at Chalk River laboratories' NRU reactor is required in order to ensure that the MOX fuel is suitable for use in CANDU reactors.

The AECB will be assessing the details of the test program and it will proceed only if the AECB confirms that plutonium will remain secure and that there will be no health risks to the workers at the Chalk River laboratories, to the public or to the environment.

In conclusion, I reiterate that Canada has a role to play in enhancing world peace and security. This could include playing a role, as a trusted third party, in helping to ensure that weapons usable plutonium in Russia and the U.S.—

**The Deputy Speaker:** I am sorry, the hon. parliamentary secretary's time has expired.

## EMPLOYMENT

**Mr. Vic Althouse (Mackenzie, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, last Friday I rose in my place to ask a question concerning the results of the labour force statistics which showed that there was an appalling lack of employment opportunities for the youth of this country and that the appalling situation has existed throughout the mandate of this government.

The data were quite clear. The participation rate for most Canadians runs between 63 per cent and 64.8 per cent, but for young people the participation rate dropped from 62.7 per cent back in 1989, which made it fairly close to the average for all Canadians, to an abysmal 48.8 per cent at the end of 1996.

It seemed to me that the loss of these 25,000 or 30,000 jobs among the youth group alone last year was reason enough for Canadians to begin to ask their government why this situation has resulted.

I know that in the answer the government is going to talk about the youth employment strategy which it unveiled today, but I would remind it that when the electors made it government they were assured in the red book that there would be apprenticeship training programs and programs where the government and employers would join together to provide the experience needed for young people to become acceptable full time workers. None of that has happened.

What is being proposed is basically a subsidy for private business and government departments to hire university students. The strategy is almost exclusively in that direction.

The opportunities for young people under 25 and even under 30 are so abysmal in this country that we are beginning to look like some of the less developed countries across the world.

Young people are not lazy. They are not stupid. They are well educated. They just have not had the chance to work in a job.

In the less developed countries young people have begun to invent jobs for themselves. They are street musicians. They are buskers. They are entertainers on the streets. They are squeegee kids who dart in and out at stoplights to clean windshields. That is the kind of stuff which ten years ago we saw only in less developed countries. Now we are seeing it in Canada. Right here, close to Parliament Hill in Ottawa, at the corner of Colonel By and Wellington we see it every day.

This is the only way these people have of making any kind of a living. It is time the government took more responsibility and lived up to the promises it made to the people when it took over the responsibility of running the federal government. It should be more attuned to the special needs of the very young, to make certain that the job program as promised is worked on.

After three and a half years all we have is program that is basically a repeat of most of the old programs that were tried years ago before expenditure became something government was extremely worried about and so those programs were cut.

There should be programs that encourage or force large employers to take on young people as apprentices. Instead what we have is a non-policy, and what has resulted is young people are volunteering for jobs, working in restaurants as waiters and waitresses for nothing hoping to get some tips. They are volunteering in offices for nothing—

**The Deputy Speaker:** The hon. member's time has expired.

**Mr. Guy H. Arseneault (Parliamentary Secretary to Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, investing in our young people is an investment in Canada's future. The youth employment strategy announced today by the Minister of Human Resources Development provides us with the tools we need to help thousands of young Canadians enter today's complex and demanding labour market.

The strategy aims to reach more young Canadians and give them better access to the information services and resources they need to acquire the skills and experience for today's workforce. The strategy builds on what works, strengthening existing programs that help young Canadians bridge the gap between school and work.



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For example, Youth Service Canada and Youth Internship Canada will focus on the needs of youth who face serious disadvantages entering the job market. Student Summer Job Action will receive increased funding in 1997 to help more than 60,000 young people get career related summer jobs.

[*Translation*]

The strategy will also give participants work experience in sectors that could provide long term employment. In partnership with the private sector, non profit agencies and community organizations, new internships will be created for the more than 110,000 young people in sectors like science and technology, the environment, international trade and international development.

Internship programs for the first nations and for the Inuit will be given new resources to enable young native people living on the

reserve and in northern communities to acquire skills and work experience.

Young people must have access to the information they need to find job opportunities. We have set up centralized services available on the Internet and by calling 1-800-935-5555, in publications and at youth information fairs.

[*English*]

The youth employment strategy consolidates and builds—

**The Deputy Speaker:** I am sorry, the hon. parliamentary secretary's time has expired.

A motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m.

(The House adjourned at 6.58 p.m.)

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