



CANADA

# House of Commons Debates

---

VOLUME 133 • NUMBER 263 • 1st SESSION • 35th PARLIAMENT

---

OFFICIAL REPORT  
(HANSARD)

**Thursday, November 23, 1995**

---

**Speaker: The Honourable Gilbert Parent**



# HOUSE OF COMMONS

Thursday, November 23, 1995

The House met at 10 a.m.

---

Prayers

---

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[Translation]

### GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

**Mr. Peter Milliken (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):**

Madam Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8), I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the government's response to two petitions.

\* \* \*

[English]

## COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

### GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

**Mr. Paul Zed (Fundy-Royal, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the fifth report of the Standing Committee on Government Operations.

Pursuant to an order of the House dated Wednesday, November 8, 1995, the committee studied Bill C-101, an act to amend the National Housing Act, and has agreed to report it without amendment.

### PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

**Mr. Peter Milliken (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I have the honour to present the 101st report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House

Affairs regarding associate membership on the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food.

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

(1005)

## FOREIGN AID RESTRICTION ACT

**Mr. Art Hanger (Calgary Northeast, Ref.)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-357, an act respecting restriction on foreign aid.

He said: Mr. Speaker, this bill is designed to stop the flow of financial or other aid to any foreign country that refuses to accept re-entry of its nationals or former nationals deported from Canada.

Far too often when foreign born criminals are ordered deported from Canada, deportation is hampered because some countries do not want to take back their nationals. The foreign aid restriction act addresses this issue by freezing aid to countries that frustrate the Canadian deportation process.

The bill is a strong measure to ensure effective deportation policy in Canada. If a country will not take back its citizens who have committed criminal acts in Canada or who have misrepresented their past involvement in organized criminal activity, terrorism or other activities as noted under section 19 of the Immigration Act of Canada and are ordered deported, the bill would then direct the Department of Foreign Affairs to suspend all foreign aid to that country.

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

\* \* \*

## COMMEMORATION OF THE BIRTHPLACE OF CONFEDERATION ACT

On the Order: Private Members' Business:  
Second reading and reference to the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage of Bill C-292, an act to

commemorate the birthplace of Confederation-Member for Hillsborough.

**Mr. George Proud (Hillsborough, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, it is with great regret and lack of support by my Liberal colleagues that I ask you to seek unanimous consent so that I withdraw my private members' bill, Bill C-292, an act to commemorate the birthplace of Confederation.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu):** Does the hon. member have the unanimous consent of the House?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

(Order discharged and bill withdrawn.)

\* \* \*

[Translation]

## COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

### PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

**Mr. Peter Milliken (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, with leave of the House I move, seconded by the hon. member for Mississauga South, that the 101st report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs tabled in the House today be concurred in.

(Motion agreed to.)

\* \* \*

[English]

## PETITIONS

### TAXATION

**Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36, I wish to present a petition which has been circulating across Canada. This petition has been signed by a number of Canadians from Estevan, Saskatchewan.

The petitioners draw to the attention of the House that managing the family home and caring for preschool children is an honourable profession which has not been recognized for its value to our society.

They also state that the Income Tax Act discriminates against families that make the choice to provide care in the home to preschool children, the disabled, the chronically ill and the aged.

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

### BELL CANADA

**Mr. Andy Mitchell (Parry Sound-Muskoka, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to present a petition on behalf of over 500 Bell pensioners.

These pensioners believe that Bell Canada, which was responsible for the choice of Confederation Life as an administrator of its group RRSP funds and which encouraged its employees to participate in it, has an obligation to ensure that its employees do not suffer economically from their pensions being placed at risk due to the collapse of Confederation Life.

They ask that Parliament initiate an investigation.

### “ON TO OTTAWA” TREK

**Mr. Simon de Jong (Regina-Qu'Appelle, NDP):** Madam Speaker, it is an honour today to present a petition concerning the “On to Ottawa” trek.

These petitions are historically important in that they bear the signatures of some of the original 1935 “On to Ottawa” trekkers, including Mr. Robert Savage, the last living member of the delegation of eight to meet with the then Prime Minister R. B. Bennett.

(1010)

Sixty years ago Prime Minister Bennett ordered the arrest of the “On to Ottawa” trek leaders at a public meeting, hence provoking the Regina riot. The trekkers, citizens of Regina who witnessed the riot, family members and other Canadians draw the attention of the House to the “On to Ottawa” trek and its abrupt end in Regina on Dominion Day 1935, and the then federal government's role in the police riot in Regina.

These petitioners call on Parliament to extend to the 1935 trekkers, the Regina citizens and their families its unequivocal and official apology for its part in provoking the police riot.

\* \* \*

## QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

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

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu):** Is that agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

### DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT ACT

The House resumed from November 21 consideration of the motion that Bill C-96, an act to establish the Department of Human Resources Development and to amend and repeal certain related acts, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

**Mr. John Murphy (Annapolis Valley-Hants, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity today to speak on Bill C-96.

The bill has a single and fairly simple purpose, integration. The government is setting out a solid legislative process for integrating Canada's social and labour market programs. With these changes, the Department of Human Resources Development brings under one roof all of our efforts to help Canadians achieve their full potential in society and in our economy.

Within this single department are all the programs and services that help people looking for work find and keep jobs, help employers find workers they need, help workers and employers under federal jurisdiction to maintain fair labour standards and a safe working environment, help people between jobs, Canadian seniors, families with low incomes and people with disabilities to get the income support they need.

It will help people get training and develop new skills for a changing economy. As well, it will help local businesses, communities and entire industries to target the skills for the future and build a skilled workforce that will help Canada be competitive and prosperous in a changing world.

By bringing all of these different programs into one department, we have taken an important first step toward ensuring programs work together, providing meaningful, co-ordinated solutions for the real world.

By taking this step the government has helped set the stage for real integration in the way programs and services are delivered to Canadians. Let us face it, when people come looking for service, they could care less which program branch delivers that service. The last thing they need is to be sent running around from one office to another.

One of the most fundamental goals of the government's approach is to ensure that integration takes place at the local level. To do so we must focus on locating the decision making and design of services at the local level. Instead of

highly centralized decision making, we need to allow a much greater degree of discretion and judgment in the field.

Having been in the field of psychiatry and mental health for 30 years, I know what it means to tailor programs to individuals; it is very important and this bill accomplishes that.

Over the last two years I have developed a close working relationship with the Canada Employment Centre in my riding of Annapolis Valley-Hants. I have had many opportunities to meet with the employees, listen to their ideas and watch these professionals do their jobs. I am convinced more than ever that decision making power must rest with the local level.

Decisions about what kinds of programs make sense in a community should be made by the community, in partnership with local businesses, trade unions, community and municipal organizations. If it is going to work we have to completely rethink the way we define programs and services.

#### (1015)

As my hon. colleague from Burin-St. George's stated, we cannot say to communities across Canada: "Here is a program and here are all the rules you have to follow. Do it our way or not at all". He also went on to say that individuals need programs and even though it is not what they need, this is the only program we have money for so take it or leave it.

Instead, we want to say to communities and individuals: "Here are some basic tools that we know have worked. Here is the money and the available resources. Now you the client decide which tools make sense and how you can use these resources most effectively". Just do what needs to be done. That is the motto of this bill.

That is what integration means, bringing it down to the local level. That is what we are trying to do with Bill C-96. The government is also bringing this approach to the largest single social program in Canada, unemployment insurance.

For years now, we have had two separate tracks going for people who are unemployed. On the one hand there is the UI system, an absolutely vital program providing temporary income support for people between jobs. On the other hand we have developed an increasingly sophisticated and effective set of employment programs, a set of tools to help people develop new skills, gain work experience and in the end find jobs.

Our challenge in this bill is to integrate these two components, to build a single integrated employment service that people can turn to, not just for a cheque but for help to get back into the workforce. This means finding a way to combine that essential system of income protection provided by UI with an active system of employment, a system that gives people the resources and the opportunity to make choices about the kind of skills that are required, the kind of future they want to build for themselves.

For example, we are experimenting with a form of internship with small businesses. There are companies that desperately want to hire new workers but cannot afford to provide the training new workers require. With this program we help them hire young people, older workers and women returning to the workforce. We provide some support to pay for the learning curve, the time it obviously takes for new workers to become fully productive in their new jobs. The experiment is getting good results. Small businesses are creating jobs for unemployed Canadians, real permanent jobs.

Over the past year we have developed a program for self-employment under unemployment insurance. We want to give people a choice. Rather than simply collecting benefits while they look for a new job, we want to give people the opportunity to create their own jobs. The department provides some financial support, monitoring and counselling to help participants get their businesses started.

Over the past year 30,000 people have started their own businesses this way through the unemployment insurance system. They have not created just 30,000 jobs but rather 60,000 jobs. That is the kind of positive initiative that can happen when we think in terms of integration.

Another example of integration can be seen in our government's strategic initiatives program. This program is important since it provides the government with the unique opportunity to experiment with program design that will support future policy development.

In September 1994 the government in partnership with the Government of Nova Scotia announced the launching of such a program. Success Nova Scotia 2000 will assist 3,000 young Nova Scotians to gain valuable work experience in leading industries using internships as an important part of their learning culture.

(1020 )

It is part of our commitment to find better ways for young people to secure jobs. By bringing together a full range of Canada's social and labour market programs, we are setting a new course and making a positive difference in Canada.

Bill C-96 provides a strong basis for this new direction. It ensures the structure that is in place for the federal government continues bringing programs and services together while working with our partners in the provinces and the communities across the country.

[Translation]

**Mrs. Suzanne Tremblay (Rimouski-Témiscouata, BQ):** Madam Speaker, ever since the Bloc Québécois arrived in the House of Commons, Ottawa has treated us to power plays of every description. First, it created the Department of Canadian Heritage. In so doing, Ottawa denied the existence of the Quebec people and the government gave itself a mandate to defend and promote Canadian culture and Canadian identity.

Then came power play number two: the Department of Health. With this decision, the government expanded and consolidated its control over an exclusively provincial jurisdiction.

And now for Ottawa power play number three. This time, it is about human resources. I am referring to the bill before the House today, the act to establish the Department of Human Resources Development and to amend and repeal certain related acts. With this bill, the department blatantly ignores the existing consensus in Quebec on manpower training and directly intrudes in this provincial jurisdiction.

A fourth power play is now looming, and I am referring to reforms in programs connected with income security for seniors. Of course for the past two years, every time he had to field a question in the House, we saw the Minister of Human Resources Development rise indignantly and play the same tape over and over again: "The document is wrong, you misread, and you do not understand".

However, there is every indication that Ottawa will use this reform to save money, again at the expense of the seniors, and the minister responsible seems to be the only one in this House who is misinformed.

In the February budget that was supposed to reshape Canada, using a Tory recipe with a Liberal label, the Minister of Finance announced a reform of programs relating to income security for seniors. This reform was to take effect in 1997. According to the Minister of Finance, it will be based on the following five principles: first, undiminished protection for all seniors who are less well off, which means there will be no increase in benefits but payments to the less well off will be maintained at present levels.

Second, a continuation of full indexation of pensions. Third, eligibility for OAS benefits will be based on family income. People should realize that this will significantly change the present system. In fact, OAS has always been universal, but after the Chrétien government's reform, the amount of the OAS cheque will depend on family income.

Fourth, benefit levels will be reduced as income levels rise. Ottawa's so-called positive approach carefully conceals its plans to lower the ceiling for the clawback.

Fifth, control of program costs. In other words, administration of the OAS system will have to cost less.

This sketchy outline of Ottawa's intentions received a stinging response from Ms. Blackburn, Quebec's income security minister. In a press release dated March 2, the minister commented that the federal government was launching another attack on the incomes of seniors and that the reform announced in the Martin budget would permanently destroy the balance of the current OAS system.

The minister also pointed out that the decision to provide OAS benefits on the basis of family income would mean

that more seniors, mainly women, would have to turn over their benefits to the federal government. The minister went on to say that women had won recognition of their independent status in society, but now, because of budgetary cutbacks, once they were retired their status would depend on that of their spouse and their family income and that, considering the measures proposed by Mr. Axworthy and Mr. Martin, one wondered if women's rights meant anything at all to the federal government.

(1025)

The minister's final conclusion is that such a change in calculating old age pensions makes them no longer a foundation for financial security in retirement but a social assistance program.

Seniors will be entitled to an old age pension if their income places them in the category of persons with modest means. We must therefore acknowledge that the federal government did not have the courage before the referendum to clearly and precisely inform Quebecers of what was really in store for them in connection with old age pensions, because it knew what an impact that knowledge could have had on the final outcome of the vote.

Jean-Robert Sansfaçon, an editorial writer for *Le Devoir*, saw the announcements of old age pension cuts by the Minister of Finance in more or less the same light as Mrs. Blackburn. In his editorial last February 28 he wrote as follows: "If Ottawa goes ahead with this, it will mean an end to universal old age pensions, which might end up being reserved only for households with modest incomes. This is a really new concept, one more closely related to social assistance than to a pension plan, and would encourage everyone to save money during their working years".

In another editorial on March 4 he wrote: "Although this was not in the least what was expected of it, the present Liberal government is preparing to axe the plan. As early as 1997, we will see the end of basic benefits for everyone regardless of income. The amount received will no longer be the same for everyone but will be calculated according to total household income. Instead of being the base of the retirement income pyramid as it was in the past, the old age pension would become a kind of welfare payment. This is more than a reform, it is more like a revolution".

Before the House adjourned for the scheduled parliamentary recess, my colleague for Mercier got hold of a document called *Serving Canada's Seniors*.

This document confirms the government's intentions of changing the old age pension into a plan reserved for only the poorest in our society. Page 5 of this document states: "The old age pension system, the guaranteed income supplement, the spouse's allowance and the senior citizens' tax credit will be combined into a single new program requiring an income test".

In short, all programs will be rolled into one and the pension will be paid to seniors according to family income.

After she obtained this document, the member for Mercier asked the Minister of Human Resources Development how he could reconcile what was revealed in this document with the Prime Minister's statement that the best way to protect our social benefits was to vote no. With his now legendary arrogance, the minister replied that the document in question was a mere invention by the Bloc Québécois.

I would like to inform the people of Canada and of Quebec officially that no one within the Bloc has time to waste in writing such a document. And let me particularly point out that, if it were really a document from the Bloc, it would have been available in both of this country's official languages, and not just English.

If the minister sincerely believes that the Bloc authored this document, I must reach the conclusion that, on the one hand, he does not know what is going on in his own department, and one of two things on the other hand. Either he has not read the budget of his finance colleague, or he read it without understanding it, for the document *Serving Canada's Seniors* contains the income security program reform promised in the Minister of Finance's budget last February. I would add that I am amazed that the Minister of Human Resources Development would point the finger at our party, when it is the Bloc which has been trying to cast some light on the coming changes to the various programs relating to income security for Canada's and Quebec's seniors.

I would like to conclude with an invitation to the Minister of Human Resources Development to re-examine his old age pension strategy. To pay off the deficit at the expense of seniors, especially women seniors, is an unacceptable decision. When there is a budget in excess of \$160 billion, one is entitled to think that all of our social benefits could be preserved, including old age pensions. The government must have the courage to make decisions that will enable all citizens to do their part to improve the collective well-being, and not make the least well off among us pay the price on their own.

(1030)

[English]

**Mr. Peter Thalheimer (Timmins-Chapleau, Lib.):**

Madam Speaker, thank you for this opportunity to speak on Bill C-96, which seeks to establish the legislative framework for the Department of Human Resources Development.

I have been somewhat amused throughout the course of the debate on this issue by the comments of some opposition members, which suggest either a misreading of the bill or an overactive imagination. For instance, some members of the official opposition claim to detect a sinister plot by the government to usurp areas of provincial responsibility. Indeed, some have even gone so far as to suggest that we might seek to sabotage existing educational, training, and manpower programs in the province of Quebec. This rather odd scenario was perhaps best articulated by one Bloc member who suggested that this legislation might be part of

some hidden agenda by the government to demolish all the educational tools Quebec has developed.

Members of the third party seem equally confused. Many Reform members have expressed disappointment that the bill will not usher in the millennium and solve all the country's problems in one fell swoop. This would be a miracle were it to occur, since the bill from its inception was designed simply to take care of some legislative and administrative issues.

It is difficult to determine whether such opposition concerns are real or simply represent mere political gamesmanship. However, it seems only fair to give these members the benefit of the doubt.

I would like to take a few moments to address some of the misconceptions clearly plaguing some opposition members and explain why passage of the bill is so important for assuring further progress in providing even higher levels of service to Canadians.

To begin with, let me state what this bill is not designed to do. It is not, as some opposition members have suggested, a power grab or an attempt to raid areas of provincial jurisdiction. This should be clear from even the most cursory reading of this bill, which makes no significant changes to the statutory elements of the founding departments that are being brought together under this legislation.

Equally important is the fact that this bill does not change the powers of the federal government or the provinces. Nor does it seek to grant new powers to the federal government, as some have tried to suggest. The department's mandate is clearly limited to just those matters over which Parliament has jurisdiction. Nor will there be any new powers granted by clause 20, which empowers the minister to sign contracts with agencies and institutions other than the provinces. This authority already exists and therefore represents no change whatsoever.

If such concerns are unfounded, what does this bill really seek to do? Simply put, it seeks to recognize in a legislative, unified way the restructuring already under way, which is bringing together under one umbrella organization portions of the former departments of employment and immigration, health and welfare, secretary of state, and all of labour.

This consolidation is critical, since it will allow us to take a more holistic approach to the social, economic and training issues that have traditionally been addressed by these departments. It will allow us to provide better service at lower cost and develop the flexible, imaginative, and highly targeted approaches needed to adequately address the challenges facing Canadians now and in the future.

Of course this process of renewal has been under way for some time. I am pleased to say that this new department has had a number of successes in developing new approaches so Canadians can better cope with an increasingly demanding labour market.

As gratifying as this is, more remains to be done. That is why the changes contained in the bill are so important. To begin with, it will help us build on these initial successes by clarifying the role of the department and the responsibilities of the minister to both Parliament and Canadians generally. It will simplify the current complex trail of statutory powers, many of them going back to the original pieces of legislation that set up the founding departments, by providing one act that sets out the mandate and powers of the department. Such a change will clarify the identity of the department by laying out for both employees and clients the department's goals and the resources it will have to achieve them.

**(1035)**

As well, the legislation will give people and organizations working with the department a clear idea of just who it is they are working with. As incredible as it may seem, many departmental officials still use old letterhead bearing the names of their former departments for legal and contracting purposes. This is confusing for partners, since in their minds those old departments no longer exist.

Of course these are not the only administrative problems to be addressed. For instance, without the proper enabling legislation simple tasks such as transferring personnel can be costly and time-consuming. This is also the case with large and detailed contracts, which often involve a number of former departments.

Most important of all is the need to bring the current transitional phase of restructuring to a close and then move forward. We need to build on our recent successes and undertake exciting new initiatives aimed at investing in our most important asset, people. To do this we need to clear away administrative obstacles so we can further undertake new initiatives such as UI reform, develop new programs and services under the human resource investment fund, and improve programs for our most vulnerable citizens, including seniors and the disabled.

Finally, this legislation will improve service to Canadians while at the same time ensuring taxpayers' dollars are spent in the most cost effective manner possible.

The bill before us will allow us to achieve all these goals. It will create the architecture required to implement the reforms needed to support Canadians with the job training opportunities they need to enter the next century with confidence. I would encourage members to support Bill C-96.

**Mr. Keith Martin (Esquimalt-Juan de Fuca, Ref.):** Madam Speaker, Bill C-96, an act to establish the Department of Human Resources Development and to amend and repeal certain related acts, is basically just reorganization of the department and does not offer any substantive changes.

It amazes me that with the number of people who are currently dependent on HRD for their welfare, some legitimately and some not, with the country in economic



doldrums, with the debt increasing, with the IMF recently downgrading our country's rating by 50 per cent six weeks ago, the government persists in serving up bills that nibble around the edges of these problems, which affect us all.

Here is another opportunity lost. Never at any other time in recent history has this country required strong leadership in so many different areas. HRD is no different. In fact HRD affects the lives of those who are in the lowest socioeconomic situations within our country.

We sympathize with the government in the position it faces. Indeed it is a difficult one. However, it is not an excuse for inaction, particularly since we as a party have put forward strong solutions to address these very important areas. Our HRD areas are in critical shape. They are in effect ready to fall apart.

On the one hand, we have an increase in demand. On the other hand, with an increasing debt we have less money to spend on social programs. An important fact is that by the year 2010 the combination of payments on the interest and all the payments on social programs will consume every single dollar and every penny that comes into the federal coffers. What is the government going to do when that day comes? It is only 15 years from now. What is it going to do?

We need intelligent plans in order to put social programs on a firm fiscal footing. The consequence of not doing that is to face collapse. Those who are going to suffer the most are those who are in greatest need. It is not the people in this room who are going to suffer; it is the people in soup kitchens, the people who cannot feed their children anything but macaroni and cheese, the people who are unemployable and the people who are not making ends meet. They are the ones who are going to hit the wall. They are the ones who are going to have to pick up the pieces, but they will not be able to pick up the pieces.

**(1040)**

The Reform Party has been accused of being a slash and burn party. I would not have joined this party and my colleagues would not have joined it if that were the case. I believe that every member of Parliament is committed to ensuring that social programs will continue in the future. We do not want to see people suffer. However, to sit around and do nothing is the single greatest threat to social programs. Inaction threatens social programs. It is causing them to implode. Health care is being rationed. Social programs are being rationed. There have been cuts across the board in welfare. That is what is preventing the people who truly need the programs from being able to live a healthy life.

Those who suffer the most are the children. They are not receiving the proper nutrition. They do not have the ability to grow up to be healthy and strong.

We spend \$19.1 billion on old age security. The cost of that is increasing rapidly. It is out of control. Within the next 15 years the number of seniors will increase by 40 per cent.

How will we pay for this? There is absolutely no plan for providing OAS to these people.

The Canada pension plan is \$500 billion in debt. This is not accounted for in the debt figures. It is not actuarially sound, and there is no plan to change it.

The Reform Party has put forward a plan for super RRSPs. I hope the government will seriously look at that plan and work with us on the program to ensure that the people who need it will receive both the OAS and the CPP.

I would like to make some constructive suggestions. First, we have to decrease duplication and decentralize. It was a tragedy that the referendum was based in part on decentralization, because that is going to have to happen in every province across the country. For the country to be carved up partly over decentralization is a tragedy, because it is inevitable.

In fact clause 6 of the bill does the opposite. It strengthens the hand of the federal government rather than decentralizing powers. Decentralizing powers does not mean that people will suffer. By doing that, duplication will be decreased and more money will be provided to the end user.

The government can take a leadership role by working with the provinces in providing a minimum standard across the board to create similar standards for the provinces and ensure that those provinces that are the most impoverished will not suffer. It is a challenge, but it can be met.

Second, we have to prioritize spending. It makes no sense to me that when we are prioritizing spending we cut across the board. That cuts from everybody, those who are abusing the program as well as those who are not.

In British Columbia they looked at welfare. They looked at 780 people. Of that number, 280 were flagrantly abusing the system and did not need to be on welfare. They stopped after looking at 780 people; it was too inflammatory for them to continue. That is a lot of people. That money could be better spent in bringing down the debt and also in ensuring that the people who need it will get it. Cutting across the board only makes those who are the poorest suffer more.

We should focus on skills training. Let us make sure there is enough money in the pot to provide skills for the unemployed.

We also need to decrease the tax load. We have heard much about taxing the rich and corporations. However, the reality is that small and medium sized businesses are creating the jobs in our country.

**(1045)**

What are these businesses telling us? They say that we cannot compete with other countries with our existing tax load. Many of the closed shops and closed industries and

much of the exodus of companies south are in large part due to the fact that their tax load is too great. Who suffers? It is mostly the people who are employed by them. Therefore our unemployment rates go up.

We need to decrease government red tape which is severely restricting the ability of companies to function properly. We must also decrease the debt.

We are not a slash and burn party. We have put forward constructive plans to enable us to decrease the debt, to get the deficit to zero, to prioritize social programs, to provide alternatives to social programs, to prioritize spending and to give people the skills to take care of themselves.

**Ms. Hedy Fry (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Health, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I too should like to speak to Bill C-96.

The bill is simply a housekeeping bill that brings together a number of departments under one roof. Yet it has inflamed the emotions of both opposition parties. Their criticisms are so completely unjustified that I must wonder if in making the accusations both parties are really speaking to their not so hidden agenda.

Some members opposite see Bill C-96, particularly clause 6, as a power grab. I have no idea how they came to this conclusion because clause 6 simply states:

The powers, duties and functions of the Minister extend to and include all matters over which Parliament has jurisdiction and relating to the development of the human resources of Canada not by law assigned to any other Minister, department, board or agency of the Government of Canada, and are to be exercised with the objective of enhancing employment, encouraging equality and promoting social security.

Any reasonable objective analyst not fixated on a separatist agenda or decentralist ideology would see that clause as a statement of purpose. It lists clear and legitimate limits for the minister, whose mandate is and always has been to devise policies that enhance employment, encourage equality and promote social security.

Bill C-96 does not change federal or provincial powers at all. It does not tip the balance one way or the other. It neither increases nor reduces the minister's range of authority. The statutory powers of the department in place now are unchanged. I am sure members of both opposition parties who have basic reading comprehension skills must know that.

The bill does not establish new initiatives or alter existing ones in any way. Only those members opposite who have chosen to play the victim role to the hilt and who apparently see a potential humiliation in every act of the federal government would see a power grab in the bill.

The three objectives set out in clause 6 of the bill, enhancing employment, encouraging equality and promoting social security, have always been key objectives

of the federal government, especially of Liberal federal governments.

If a national government is not in the business of creating jobs, promoting equality of opportunity and establishing a social safety net, what is its business? Any federal government on the globe that is not totally anaemic, corrupt or viciously insensitive must have these fundamental objectives, especially the government of a country that has been named for the third year running the best country in the world in which to live. If the Canadian government were to drop these objectives, the official opposition would be the first to scream unjust and declare yet another humiliation of Quebec.

The Canadian government is constitutionally responsible for unemployment insurance and for creating and operating programs that help unemployed Canadians find employment no matter where they live in the country. In my riding in British Columbia COAST and FOCUS YWCA have provided and continue to provide invaluable services, especially for single moms on welfare. Currently many of these programs do not receive funding from the B.C. government when they are actually saving tens of thousands of dollars in welfare payments.

(1050)

The federal Government of Canada has an international obligation under a convention of the International Labour Organization to provide national labour market information and exchange for all Canadians. The federal government is responsible for national economic growth and development. Therefore it is common sense that it must be involved in training.

If we have learned one thing over the past decade it is that a well trained workforce is absolutely essential if we want to remain competitive in the global marketplace and to maintain our standard of living as number one in the world. The strongest most innovative economies in the world today, Japan and Germany, have become what they are largely because of their national policies that emphasize training.

The federal government must be able to assist those affected by special situations that go beyond the jurisdictions of any one province, such as workers in the fishing industry, older workers displaced by restructuring of the economy or the dispossessed youth of Canada. In my riding Youth Service Canada projects have benefited youths very directly.

The federal government has absolutely no interest in having powers just because it wants them. The Minister of Human Resources Development said it very well when he said that we must combine resources across the country so that when one area is facing high unemployment another area helps to support it.

That is the Canadian way. That is why we have a federal country and a federal government. One part of the country supports another when it is undergoing trouble. It is a

family in which we all help each other in times of need, because we know one day we may in turn be in times of need. That is the fundamental concept of sharing. The more we fragment the country as the third party opposition would have us do, the more we divide it, separate it, decentralize it and balkanize it into a series of fiefdoms, the less capable we are of helping individuals that no longer have the benefit of that sharing. That is why the federal government must continue to play an important role in this area.

We have always been open to discussions with provincial, territorial and municipal governments about who is the best suited to deliver certain programs. We have negotiated that because we know we do not always deliver the best programs and that things must be done at the community level.

Because clause 6 of Bill C-96 sets out the department's mandate in terms of general objectives, we must have the flexibility to serve Canadians better. I do not want to sidetrack the debate by raising non-issues and reading into clause 6 things that are there. It is really a disservice to the thousands of Canadians in all provinces who benefit from job creation and training.

The other clause in Bill C-96 about which concerns have been raised is clause 20. It reads:

For the purpose of facilitating the formulation, co-ordination and implementation-

Words like co-ordination mean that we work together to make something work. It is so simple and fundamental to a clear understanding of how teamwork is accomplished, of how we pull together, that I cannot understand the problem. Anyway the clause continues:  
-the Minister may enter into agreements with a province or group of provinces, agencies of provinces, financial institutions and such other persons or bodies as the Minister considers appropriate.

Any reasonable objective observer would see in this clause no hidden agenda to intrude. It merely provides a way to formulate co-operation with all groups with which we must form partnerships if we are to make the changes.

Without the authority that clause 20 gives the minister the department would have difficulties conducting its simple mandate and its simple business. However the Bloc is bent on getting more power for the political elite in Quebec, while the Reform Party is bent solely on getting more power for the provinces and fragmenting and balkanizing the country.

In 1994-95 the department of human resources signed more than 50,000 labour market related contracts in Quebec which were worth \$700 million. Among those 50,000 contracts were 9,600 contracts with non-profit organizations, 9,300 contracts with private sector enterprises and 25,000 contracts under the fee payer trainee program, all in Quebec. It is the authority granted to the minister under clause 20.

(1055)

It allows us to enter into agreements with financial institutions for student loans. How are we to create a country of young people who can take over from us and carry on if those who cannot afford to go to school are not allowed student loans?

It enables the federal government to sign agreements with provinces to help displaced older workers. When 45 or 50 year old people lose their jobs, especially in the emerging communication technology era, they need training.

This kind of section empowered Ottawa to enter into a partnership with Quebec to help entrepreneurs and to help workers affected by the closing of the Hyundai plant in Bromont last March. The whole bill helps the department of human resources to create a national vision for Canada. It is not for British Columbia alone. It is how we work together as a country to achieve the kinds of things that make us the envy of the world.

We are a unique country. I continue to hear people talk about how another country does it and why we are not doing it the same way. Wherever we go we hear people saying that Canada is a unique country. We have learned how to work together in peace. We have learned to do what we are supposed to do, that is to create peace, order and good government.

[Translation]

**Mr. Paul Crête (Kamouraska-Rivière-du-Loup, BQ):** Madam Speaker, Bill C-96-and this may surprise you-seems to me to insult Quebec federalists. A lot of federalists in Quebec still felt, in the last referendum, that the federal government deserved one last chance to demonstrate its desire for change. Bill C-96, which was tabled before the referendum and which the federal government is still having debated in the House simply as if nothing had happened, represents the federal government's decision to interfere more systematically and with a basis in law-a new approach.

The bureaucratic powers in Ottawa have now decided to incorporate into legislation the intrusions by the federal government over the past years in the area of manpower through its control over the unemployment insurance fund. This is particularly significant and a bit of a blow to Quebec federalists and to the consensus in Quebec on the question of manpower.

There is, for example, Ghislain Dufour, the spokesperson and chief executive officer of the Conseil du patronat du Québec, who is not exactly considered a separatist or a sovereigntist in Quebec. He says that now is the time, following the close result in the referendum, for the federal government to make it clear it is in favour of change and therefore acknowledge the consensus in Quebec on training and manpower. It is time the federal government agreed to give Quebec full responsibility for manpower to put an end to the duplication and unnecessary expenditure in this sector.

We hear the same message from Gérald Ponton of the Association des manufacturiers du Québec. In the days that followed the referendum, he said it was absolutely vital that one level of government withdraw, if manpower practices were to be effective. For this to work in Quebec, it is the federal government that will have to withdraw. We must not forget that the whole matter of training is part of government activity, it does not simply come out of thin air.

As Quebec is already responsible for the labour code, which covers the vast majority of Quebec workers, for occupational health and safety, for minimum labour standards and for all regulations on professional qualifications, professional conduct and mass layoffs, giving Quebec responsibility for the entire area of training is like giving it an extra piece of equipment in its tool box. The Government of Quebec already has the networks, like the education network, for it to get involved in occupational training, among other areas, in order to ensure that young people coming along and workers needing retraining receive what they need efficiently and appropriately.

The auditor general, in his latest report, concluded that employee training costs were highest in Quebec in terms of the money spent by the federal government.

**(1100)**

This is further proof, with the numbers to support it, that the federal government should withdraw from this sector.

But, instead, it forges ahead with Bill C-96; it insists on interfering everywhere, and on signing agreements with municipal governments, various agencies, and even the provinces. But nowhere does it say that these agreements will be in keeping with the provinces' policies.

In a way, this is the continuation of the monolithic state, and this is the terrible insult to Quebec federalists who want to see the Canadian Constitution and the Canadian structure revamped so that the federal government assumes only those responsibilities which come under its jurisdiction and which would be acceptable to federalists.

I also believe that this is the proof that, after all, sovereignists are right. Even with the warning it was served on October 30, the government is unable to shift gears and proceed with the adjustments that would allow it to meet Quebecers' aspirations; the only way for Quebec to have the tools it needs will be for the province to hold another referendum and separate.

What could be said to get the government to reverse its decision to pass this bill? What could make the government withdraw from this sector? I believe it would take two conditions which will be easily attainable. First, the federal government must stop using the unemployment insurance fund as a cash cow; now that it can no longer borrow money abroad, it has discovered a domestic market, namely employee and employer UI contributions. As a result, this year, in 1995-1995, it has accumulated a five billion dollar surplus, while it cut the number of weeks during which

beneficiaries are entitled to UI benefits and increased the number of weeks of work required to qualify for UI. It has some nerve.

This is quite a message for the workers of Quebec and Canada, especially seasonal workers; it says that in order to be able to encroach on a field of exclusive provincial jurisdiction, the federal government is going to squeeze money out of those who need it the most. Let us take a worker in peat production, forestry or agriculture in general; because of those measures, instead of becoming entitled to unemployment benefits after 12, 13 or 14 weeks and receiving them for the rest of the year if his job is to continue the following year, the worker will have to find work for 14 or 15 weeks; otherwise, he will not be able to fulfil the requirements and receive a full year's income either from work or unemployment.

We know that unemployment insurance is not financed by the government, but exclusively by employer and employee contributions. Let us try to transpose this situation into another type of insurance program. You pay premiums, but you have no control whatsoever on the contract which determines how you will obtain insurance benefits; the decision is entirely up to the government. Instead of being eligible for benefits during 30 or 35 weeks, you will receive them for 25 or 30 weeks only, and there will be a four or five-week waiting period during which you will have to go on welfare. That is what is happening in Quebec this year. Between September 1994 and September 1995, the number of welfare recipients increased by 20,000 because of changes made by the federal government and now they are announcing, for next week, a new reform which will raise eligibility requirements yet again.

This also sends a message to federalists who believe there can be a difference between Canada and the United States. This government keeps trying to copy the American model, but that will never give the expected results. Canadians, particularly those of the Maritimes and Eastern Quebec and all those who really want more balance in our society and an adequate distribution of wealth and expenses, will have to stand up and say: "No; we will no longer accept that kind of action on the part of the government. It will have to restrain its activities to its own constitutional jurisdiction and withdraw once and for all from such areas as manpower training."

**(1105)**

That is why I think the government should listen to the provinces, take note of the consensus in Quebec and withdraw Bill C-96 completely, because it already has rejected our amendment which would have given the provinces an opting out option.

Since that they have rejected the amendment, the only other solution is to withdraw the bill itself so that we can clarify the situation and so that Quebec can have sole jurisdiction in the area of manpower training and take all the necessary measures to face the challenges of our changing society.

Given the arguments presented, I hope the government will have the decency to withdraw that bill.

[English]

**Mrs. Sue Barnes (London West, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, on Tuesday we dealt with the amendment proposed by the member for Mercier, a motion that had nothing to do with Bill C-96. Now perhaps we can move forward.

As I look back over the various statements by members on this bill, it seems to me there are really two basic questions we have to answer. First, does Bill C-96 represent any change in statutory powers that would allow the federal government to interfere with the provinces? Second, is the department created by Bill C-96 the kind of department we want, a department that will provide the best possible service and the right kind of service to Canadians?

We can deal with the first question very quickly. It has been answered clearly by the Minister of Human Resources Development and it is answered clearly by the bill itself. There are no substantive changes to existing statutory powers. The bill itself in clause 6 limits the powers of the minister to matters under the jurisdiction of Parliament, so there can be no intrusion on provincial areas of responsibility.

That really is the end of the discussion. Some people may say otherwise. They may say the bill is a secret plot to invade provincial territory, but saying it is so does not make it so, no matter how many times you say it. In the end we have to base any conclusions on what is really in the bill in black and white, not what is in other people's imagination. What is there in black and white is very clear: There is no interference with the provinces, possible or intended, in Bill C-96.

The second question deserves more comment. Is this the kind of department we want to create?

Fundamentally, this bill draws together all the different elements, programs and policies of the federal government related to human resources development into one integrated, coherent system. It is the basis for a new approach to helping Canadians as they deal with some of the incredible changes in the workplace and in the economy. It also provides a basis for new relationships between the federal government and individual Canadians, between different levels of government, between governments and local communities. As the Minister of Human Resources Development said when he moved second reading:

This is not a defence of the status quo or what it used to be. It is an attempt to provide a new, innovative way of governing-. The old ways are simply not relevant to the kinds of conditions we now face. That is one reason the government has undertaken to provide a new set of instruments, brought together with a single focus on policy. The minister went on to say that the single focus was there so we can tackle the real deficit problem, which is not just the fiscal deficit, but the human deficit, a deficit as

corrosive and undermining to the well-being of individuals as anything we face on the fiscal side.

How can this new department help tackle the problems we have with the human deficit? I say it is by providing a single focal point in the communities across the country, drawing together all the resources of the federal government and the community to help people find and keep jobs. It is by providing the opportunity for working more closely with the provinces to draw all of this country's resources together to help people find jobs. This is the priority of this government. It is the number one priority for Canadians. We know that.

Throughout this debate we have heard many examples of how this approach is already working. We have heard how the department is building a new integrated, decentralized service network moving from 450 to 750 points of service reaching smaller communities 24 hours a day. It is providing four times as many offices where seniors can get service in person. It is using the best technology available to speed up service, cutting UI processing time by two days, cutting old age security processing claims from eight days to one-half day.

(1110)

We have heard how major changes have made student loans more accessible, flexible and sustainable. This has helped more than 300,000 students this year alone and has provided special grants to more than 13,000 high need students. We have heard how our new youth internships are leading to real jobs for some 24,000 young Canadians and how 130 Youth Service Canada projects across the country are helping young people serve their communities while getting valuable work experience. We know this is essential.

We have heard how the department is building new stronger partnerships with the private sector. There is increased funding for sector councils, partnerships where every federal dollar generates an additional \$1.50 from industry to help Canadians adjust to the new economy, and we all have to realize it is here.

We have heard how the federal government is developing new partnerships with the provinces through joint federal-provincial initiatives. This is helping some 60,000 single mothers, older workers, aboriginals and young people to get new skills and new jobs.

We have heard again how this department is reviewing and distilling its 39 programs into a streamlined decentralized set of re-employment tools, tools that respond directly to the needs of Canadians where they live. Decisions can be made in the local communities instead of many miles away in some centralized bureaucracy. The provinces, municipalities, local businesses and organizations can be part of those decisions. They can tailor how federal service will be used to help people in their communities get back to work.

This may sound abstract, so I am going to talk about my city, London, Ontario. In the city of London, Ontario there is a wonderful example of these policies in action. Last month the minister sat down with community groups and political leaders in London to discuss the creation of a new learning and life centre there.

The London Learning and Life Centre will provide a centralized location for employment preparation, skills training and adult education. It will house a job search centre, an interactive lab for computer training and office space for community service professionals. Even an on-site child care service is planned.

An estimated, and I think this is conservative, 8,000 to 10,000 persons will utilize its services annually in London. The centre began as a community initiative, bottom up, not top down and has enormous community support. Its partner organizations include groups representing women, youth, adult learners, aboriginal people, immigrants and educators. Recognizing the real concerns, the real common sense of enabling local communities to work together for social development, the federal government contributed \$700,000 to the initial stages of the centre's creation.

We heard the minister make clear commitments to build on the success of this decentralized approach, inviting the provinces to sit down and devise new solutions, new ways of working together. This is what the Canadian public wants. We want governments to work together with communities and individuals, new ways to deliver the best possible services, the most effective services to Canadians where they live, not here in Ottawa. This is clearly the right direction. This is clearly the kind of change and the kind of department that we need as Canada prepares for a new century.

The basic philosophy behind the new department, the vision behind Bill C-96, represents something new and very exciting. It is already making a difference in my community and in the lives of hundreds of thousands of Canadians every day throughout this country.

It is up to this House now to ensure that the department can keep moving forward and that Canadians can count on this government's commitment to provide the best possible help in today's economy. Bill C-96 creates the department that can deliver what Canadians need. It creates the kind of department that can make a difference and the kind of department that makes sense.

We have every reason to move forward, not backward, and to put this legislation in place as quickly as possible.

*[Translation]*

**Mr. Maurice Dumas (Argenteuil-Papineau, BQ):**  
Madam Speaker, I stand today in this House to address Bill C-96, an act to establish the Department of Human Resources Development and to amend and repeal certain related acts.

The bill gives a legal basis to the Department of Human Resources Development in order to extend the powers of the Minister of Human Resources Development.

**(1115)**

Thus, by this bill, the minister is given the power to circumvent provincial powers in order to establish direct links with local organizations or such other persons as he considers appropriate. With increased federal intrusion in social and employment programs, and most particularly, in manpower training, all social or employment related sectors are likely to be affected by federal action. Consequently, by getting new powers, the minister is interfering with provincial jurisdiction.

In the powers, duties and functions of the minister outlined in clause 6, it is specified that he exercises his power

-with the objective of enhancing employment, encouraging equality and promoting social security-  
in matters over which Parliament has jurisdiction.

Clause 20 provides that the minister, within his powers, duties and functions, -may enter into agreements with a province or group of provinces, agencies of provinces, financial institutions and such other persons or bodies as the Minister considers appropriate.

In the old legislation, the minister only had the power to enter into agreements with a province or group of provinces.

In clause 31.3,

The Commission may authorize any person or body to exercise powers or perform duties and functions of or delegated to the Commission.

In the old legislation, it could only delegate them to "officers or employees or classes of officers or employees of the Commission or, where the Minister approves, of the Department", in section 18.3. It thus has a delegation power equal to the minister's.

Quebec partners in the labour market have long recognized the need to repatriate to Quebec federal responsibilities and budgets for manpower.

The 1989 employment forum was a major step concerning this claim. In December 1990, the Quebec Liberal government officially demanded that all federal budgets, including UI funds, allocated to manpower programs be transferred to Quebec.

The Quebec government hastened to create the Quebec manpower development society or SQDM so that labour market partners could work together to manage all manpower development programs in Quebec.

Bill C-96 increases the federal presence and encroaches on provincial jurisdiction by allowing the federal government to approach organizations, municipalities and individuals directly, without going through an intermediary.

The bill gives the minister, among other things, greater powers to intervene in income security matters for children and seniors. This opens the door to the privatization and contracting-out of certain programs, including unemployment insurance and the Canada pension plan.

As spokesman on seniors organizations for the official opposition in the House of Commons, I am outraged by the June 12 tabling of the document from the Department of Human Resources Development, which questions the universality of old age pensions.

On Thursday, October 26, my colleague, the hon. member for Mercier and official opposition critic on human resources development in the House of Commons, said this: "The old age pension plan, the guaranteed income supplement, the spouse's allowance, the pension income tax credit, and the age tax credit will be combined into a single assistance program. Seniors' eligibility for this program will be based on their income".

The hon. member for Mercier also had this to say about the reform: "It is not only the end of universality for the old age pension that is at stake. What this government wants is to base the amount of the pension cheque on family income. This will affect mostly women and threatens their financial independence. The planned reform would also affect those who already receive their pensions, despite what the Prime Minister of Canada had suggested".

It is obvious that the end of universality for old age pensions marks a significant setback for Canadian and Quebec society, for women, and for all those who have a right to expect a minimum of financial security in the future.

**(1120)**

Quebec also has the dubious honour of having the highest rate of poverty among seniors over 65 years old in all of Canada. This analysis was made by the senior citizens council. The old age security pension remains the main source of income for seniors, and elderly women in particular. I spoke many times in this House to denounce the federal government's planned cuts to old age pension, especially those to be announced after the October 30 referendum in Quebec.

When we put questions to the HRD minister in the House, he laughs them off and always seems to have all the answers. To listen to him, you would think that he is graced with papal infallibility. On September 26, as the official opposition's critic for seniors organizations, I asked Prime Minister of Canada if he could confirm for Quebecers and Canadians in general that his government's old age pension reform was actually ready but being put off until after the referendum so seniors would not know how extensive the cuts awaiting them were.

At the same time, I pointed out to the Prime Minister that his Minister of Foreign Affairs had clearly stated that the federal government would definitely not touch old age pensions, which is in total contradiction with his finance colleague's announcement, in his February budget, of an old age pension reform.

Of course, as could be expected, the federal government did not announce any cuts before the Quebec referendum. I must point out that the federal labour minister and minister responsible for the government's no campaign in the referendum also departed from the tradition federal Liberal line in reassuring a concerned lady by saying that the pension system would also be maintained under the Quebec sovereignty bill.

On September 21, I had questioned the Minister of Finance about the review of the Canada pension plan, pointing out to him that it was obvious that he and the HRD minister were waiting until after the referendum to let the axe fall on the old age pension program.

The Parti Quebecois made a firm commitment to maintain the old age pension program in a sovereign Quebec. In fact, clause 11 of the draft bill on Quebec's sovereignty states that pensions and supplements payable to the elderly shall continue to be paid by the Government of Quebec according to the same terms and conditions.

Unlike the federal government, Quebec will be able to fund this program through tax moneys recovered from Ottawa. It should be pointed out however that the old age security program is funded through taxes levied by the federal government in Quebec and across Canada. On the other hand, the Quebec pension plan, QPP for short, is funded through premiums paid by Quebec employers and workers. With the QPP, Quebec already has all the administrative structures needed to keep providing the old age pensions currently paid by Ottawa out of Quebec taxpayers' taxes when Quebec becomes sovereign, which should not be long in coming.

Bill C-96 is the federal government's way of interfering in and creating more overlap with provincial jurisdictions. Areas coming under the responsibility of the minister would include old age security programs, and the Bloc Quebecois cannot support such a bill.

*[English]*

**Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, we have heard many fine words about Bill C-96 over the past two weeks. I will quote some words said on Monday because they sum up one of the main reasons we need to proceed with the bill.

One member said: "The key to the future is a good training program based on the manpower requirements of the region in which they live. It is certainly not here in Ottawa, far from my region and others, that public officials can determine the best training programs for my constituents. They are too far away and they do not know about our specific needs. Therefore the decision making process

regarding manpower training must be closer to those concerned”.

**(1125 )**

Bringing decision making closer to those concerned is perhaps the simplest way to describe the principle underlying Bill C-96. What is interesting is that the person who described it in this way was none other than the member for Chicoutimi.

I am very pleased to see that the Bloc Quebecois, despite all its rhetoric, agrees with the basic intention of the bill. The government is decentralizing labour market programs more than ever before so that individuals and communities are empowered to make real decisions that affect their lives.

If the member truly believes this is the right thing to do, and it is, he has every reason to endorse the bill. Of course the member goes on to describe the bill as unacceptable to Quebecers. His colleague, the member for Blainville-Deux-Montagnes, goes so far as to describe Bill C-96 as a steamroller of centralizing and anti-social legislation. I can only assume this is merely a lapse into the Bloc's more picturesque rhetoric.

I urge the member for Chicoutimi to trust his first instincts and recognize the bill for the ground breaking decentralizing legislation it is.

Everyone in the House recognizes there is a need to forge better partnerships, better working relationships between the federal and provincial governments. This is precisely why the federal government has invited the provinces to talk about new arrangements for labour market programs. We have made it clear that we fully respect the integrity of provincial jurisdiction in the area of training. We want to find a better way to work together.

Bill C-96 is a concrete illustration of this desire. The Minister of Human Resources Development said on November 9: “One of the direct results of the department will be to give far more space for provincial governments to begin to make decisions at their level of responsibility and jurisdiction. The time has come for us to take a much closer look at the respective roles and to build bridges to bring us together”.

Our actions as a government, the initiatives taken with this department over the past two years, also demonstrate this desire to work with the provinces and address their concerns. Surely the time has come for all levels of government, federal, provincial and municipal, to rise above the old-fashioned turf wars and start finding ways to work together, to bring our resources together and to help the people we serve.

The Bloc, on the other hand, seems intent on blocking the very progress it professes to believe in. Instead of urging us on, instead of supporting positive, constructive action, it throws up this wall of words. Under the banner of jurisdiction the Bloc says we should do nothing. In the

name of progress and change I say let us find better ways to do our job.

We cannot do a better job by building walls that keep us apart. We need a better philosophy. We need the kind of philosophy the minister outlined when he spoke of the need to empower communities and individuals to make more choices. What does the Bloc Quebecois saying response? No. Individuals should not be empowered to make more choices. That is the philosophy of the Bloc Quebecois.

We need the kind of philosophy the minister outlined when he spoke of new partnerships: government with the private sector, government with the school boards, government with the provinces. What does the Bloc say in response? No. We do not want to work together for change.

Is it any wonder so many people in Quebec feel abandoned? The member for Chicoutimi speaks with concern for his riding, which has the highest unemployment rate in Canada. How can he expect to help Canadians in his riding with a do nothing philosophy?

How can we hope to help the people of Chicoutimi by saying: “You cannot have this awful federalist Bill C-96. You cannot have a system that gives you the power and resources you need to build better lives and get good jobs. It is not the Bloc Quebecois way.

This is plain nonsense. Quebecers and all Canadians deserve something better than that. The one million Quebecers who turn to HRDC for help each year deserve the best help they can get. The more than 164,000 Quebecers we helped find jobs last year deserve that help. The 44,789 students who found employment last summer deserve those jobs.

**(1130 )**

The 700,000 Quebecers who use provincial social assistance programs deserve to see the federal government's contribution, almost \$3 billion each year, used in the most flexible and productive way possible.

The half million UI claimants in Quebec each month deserve the best possible service in their quest to get back into the workforce.

The 400,000 Quebecers who benefited from the department's employment programs and services deserve to see those programs become more effective, more flexible, more focused on their needs.

The 850,000 Quebec seniors deserve to benefit from improved access and service that will be available as the department builds its new service delivery system.

Every Quebecer deserves more than the status quo. Bill C-96 is about moving beyond the status quo to something better, to more responsive programs and services, better programs and services designed and delivered at the community level, where they can make a difference.



Bill C-96 will strengthen partnerships and decentralize power even further and let Quebecers make the decisions about what kinds of programs and services make sense in their communities.

We have made enormous progress over the last year in the pioneering of this approach, fundamentally rethinking and redoing the way HRDC works in communities in Quebec and across Canada. We are making enormous progress in working with the provinces to provide the most flexible services possible to all Canadians. Consider, for example, the Canada health and social transfer, which will replace the old Canada assistance plan. The whole point of this CHST is to help the provinces deliver the kinds of social benefits and services they want to deliver but cannot because of the inflexibility of existing arrangements.

We are making real progress, showing that we can work together in putting solid progressive social programs in the hands of Quebecers. Bill C-96 is about continuing this momentum. It is about continuing to work together to clarify the roles of different levels of government and it is about building bridges. Surely this is a better way than talking about imaginary power grabs. Building bridges together is the philosophy. This vision underlies the new Department of Human Resources Development.

Bill C-96 provides the basis for the new department. With the accord and support of the House we can put this legislation in place and move forward.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Yves Rocheleau (Trois-Rivières, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I am very pleased to address once again Bill C-96, this time at second reading. This act to establish the Department of Human Resources Development has an extremely negative impact in my riding, since it involves, among other things, a restructuring of the employment centre network across Canada, including in Quebec.

Following that restructuring, there will be 28 regional management centres in Quebec, as well as 78 local centres or suboffices. What is disturbing for Trois-Rivières and its surrounding region is that the government, in its wisdom, has decided to establish the regional operation centre in Shawinigan, instead of Trois-Rivières.

From now on, Trois-Rivières will be served by a suboffice of the regional centre in Shawinigan. You can understand that this decision is unpopular and also illogical. We strongly hope this is just an idea, but there is every indication that a final decision has been made at the departmental level. That decision is unpopular. Indeed, already, more than 25,000 residents from the Trois-Rivières region have signed a petition, in which they express their disagreement and their discontent. Moreover, all the major stakeholders, including MPs and MPPs, the mayor of Trois-Rivières, various community groups, as well as 70 organizations, including some 40 municipalities, have also expressed, in writing or through resolutions, their opposition to the government's intention.

(1135)

In addition to the employees' union, which is being disregarded in this process, two other organizations, the Fédération de l'âge d'or and the Fédération des caisses populaires of the Mauricie region, co-operated to ensure the success of that petition.

Not only is that decision unpopular, it is also illogical. It is so illogical and it makes so little sense that it even contradicts the criteria defined by the department regarding the selection and the location of these regional management centres. The main criteria, which were based on plain common sense, took into account the number of people concerned, including UI beneficiaries, income security recipients and seniors, because they are greatly affected by this project. These criteria also took into consideration the number of companies and employers hiring people who are UI beneficiaries, at least we hope this is the case, and which are concerned by such a decision and by the current role of the employment centres.

Given the numbers for these groups in the Shawinigan and Trois-Rivières regions, that decision does not make sense and goes against established criteria. Indeed, in terms of numbers, the ratio is two to one in favour of Trois-Rivières for just about every group, whether it is the overall population, the number of companies, the number of UI beneficiaries, etc.

This shows just how illogical that decision is. It is a decision which goes against the department's own criteria.

That operation is upsetting for Trois-Rivières residents, because it has to do with the establishment of regional centres. Yet, the government wants to go to Shawinigan and just keep a local centre in Trois-Rivières, in spite of the fact that the latter is recognized as the main centre in the region. This is totally unacceptable and we will continue, along with the other stakeholders, to denounce that situation.

We have to know what it will mean in the ordinary run of things. People will come to apply in Trois-Rivières, since the role of sub-offices, like the one intended for Trois-Rivières, is to receive applications for benefits, only recording facts without making any analysis nor any ruling, and then pass on that information to the regional management centre, which will from then on keep the actual file of the claimant's application. When the application will need, as is the case in three out of four applications, a supplementary, subsequent operation and a special analysis, that will mean that the whole operation, any action, any movement will come from Shawinigan, in a ratio of two to one because of the population pool.

At present, for unemployment insurance, the department's investigations, which are routine in some cases, are made in Trois-Rivières, as are complaints made to the board of referees, since the actual file is in Trois-Rivières. In answer to the letter we wrote to make the appropriate representations about the intended move, the minister indicated that services will not be altered in any way for the

people of Trois-Rivières. However, from now on, contrary to what the minister said in his letter, the department's investigations and the appeals to the board of referees will be made in Shawinigan and from Shawinigan, which substantially alters, to use the minister's word, operations as they now stand.

We therefore question the good faith of the minister who, in our opinion, is trying to fool the population when he says such things.

You have to be aware that this project has been developed, or this decision made, without any consultation. It was announced just before the House recessed, or just before the change of rhythm that occurs in our society at the beginning of the summer holidays, since the announcement was made on June 22 and later confirmed in late July or early August, at a time when it is practically impossible to mobilize the population. What a nice approach, somewhat in keeping with the minister's image.

I remind you that this was done without any consultation, both locally and regionally, and regardless of the regional dialogue that goes on in our area, the Mauricie.

**(1140)**

I remind you also, as was confirmed to me yesterday by reliable sources, that there has been no comparative analysis of the impact of keeping that centre in Trois-Rivières, which used to be the focal point, instead of moving it to Shawinigan. They did not study the impact on the population, users or costs. I will deal with that later on.

One of the impacts is that Bécancour, a community traditionally and naturally linked with Trois-Rivières, particularly as regards the manpower operations at the regional office in Trois-Rivières, will now have to deal with Drummondville, a choice that is arbitrary and inconsistent with the practices in our region, and makes no sense.

Anyone with the slightest acquaintance with this area would know things do not work that way. That is one of the reasons why my colleagues for Richelieu and Champlain and I agreed to a joint position and condemned that move, because our ridings are affected in various ways. This is a good example of the kind of co-operation that can come about when people want to co-operate.

Another aspect, which is just as revolting, is that this move will be detrimental to those most in need, people who have just lost their job and find themselves in a state of vulnerability they had not experienced before.

These people will feel increasingly uncomfortable in dealing with a system decreasingly at their service. Besides, what we have here is technological change of a type that will dehumanize relations between the department and people in need like the unemployed, seniors-who will feel the impact of that move-, people on welfare and community organizations which, as we know, rely heavily on

volunteers and government assistance. Things have been made more difficult for them, and that is why this move should be condemned.

The government can choose one of three solutions if it wants to mend its ways. First, it could maintain the status quo, deal with existing circumstances, respect the wishes of the local population and users, and keep the centre in Trois-Rivières. Everybody would be happy.

A second alternative would be to have a regional office in Trois-Rivières for the whole area, including Bécancour, and give Shawinigan the status of a regional centre for the north shore, including Saint-Tite. The situation would be similar to that of Gaspé or Sept-Îles, something that could make sense. It would be up to the hon. member for Saint-Maurice to demonstrate that such an alternative makes sense.

Third, the most absurd alternative would be to set up a regional management centre in Shawinigan to serve the whole region, a decision we will always condemn.

**Mr. Réal Ménard (Hochelaga-Maisonneuve, BQ):**

Madam Speaker, let me first start by saying that our worst nightmare has come true. What we feared when we embarked upon the last referendum campaign was that the central government would disregard one of the most solid consensus we have ever seen in the province of Quebec.

This most solid and deep-rooted consensus is that we will never be able to do anything about the employment situation if we do not give the levers required to deal with labour market-related problems to the most capable level of government to do so.

Right now, the best government to give Quebec a labour market policy to efficiently fight unemployment is not the central government, but rather the National Assembly of Quebec.

Why are we saying that it is not the central government? Because the central government has to make decisions about a labour market that covers five regions, and we know that the labour market situation in New-Brunswick is nothing like the situation in Quebec.

This is why several, if not all, of the major stakeholders on the Quebec labour market are opposed to Bill C-96.

**(1145)**

Let me remind the House of some of the organizations that are against Bill C-96. There is the Société québécoise de développement de la main-d'oeuvre, the Institut canadien de l'éducation des adultes, the FTQ, the CLC, and despite this coalition of organizations representing tens of thousands of citizens, the central government has the nerve, the gall to introduce in this House a bill that would allow the federal to interfere in an area without any mandate to do so.

I hope that the government whip and his team will finally come to their senses and realize that they are doing something irreparable by submitting Bill C-96.

Yet, when you think about it it is obvious that everything which concerns the labour market comes under provincial jurisdiction. Surely, no member of this House is unaware that the labour code, the CSST, orders respecting collective agreements and mass layoffs are areas of provincial jurisdiction and that it is perfectly natural that labour market-related policies are the specific and exclusive business of the provinces.

Let me remind the House of a fact: unemployment is not innate. One is not born unemployed. Unemployment has nothing to do with genetics. Nor has it anything to do with the language one speaks. A person's language does not bear on his or her working skills. How is it, then, that within the federation the unemployment rate has always been higher in Quebec than in Ontario? Workers in both provinces have about the same qualifications and live in about the same social and economic environment. How is it that for the last 20 or 25 years Quebec has had a higher rate of unemployment than Ontario? And I am sure we could give very concrete examples of countries where unemployment was successfully eliminated. They have what is called a frictional unemployment rate of about 3 or 4 per cent, reflecting the number of people who quit their job for a very particular reason and are looking for another one.

How is it that we are unable in our system to create conditions allowing all those who want to work to find a job? Naturally, there are those who cannot work because they are handicapped and those who are momentarily out of work and those who do not want to work. But how is it that in 1995 qualified and competent people who truly want to work find themselves in a system where the government is unable to create conditions leading to their employment? You do not have to be a rocket scientist or have three doctorates to understand that if unemployment is not a matter of heredity or of language, there must be political reasons to explain why the unemployment rate is at 11, 12 or 13 per cent.

These political reasons are very clear: we have two governments which impede each other's initiatives regarding labour market. The best example of this inefficiency, my colleague the member for Trois-Rivières referred to it, is of course the existence of two manpower centre networks which cancel each other's initiatives.

Let me just remind you that Ottawa administers just as many programs as Quebec does. Quebec has approximately 25 programs to put people back to work and so does Ottawa. What this means is that if the people that we, as members, meet in our constituency office, and I am sure that this happens to you too, are UI recipients, they are eligible for some programs, but if they receive income security benefits, they are eligible for some programs but not for others.

(1150)

I believe we are mature and lucid enough as parliamentarians to say that the situation we must aim at is having only one government that will control all powers and levers in order to help put people back to work, away from that unacceptable situation called unemployment.

This decision, this wish is incompatible with the existence of two governments and it certainly is incompatible with the fact that two governments can each have 25 programs without any coordination between them. Instead of proposing what all important stakeholders in Quebec are asking, that is that the federal government pull out of the labour sector, this government has the nerve, the irresponsibility and the irreverence to give us a bill, Bill C-96, which increases the powers of the minister in labour matters.

Can you imagine such a situation where all Quebec stakeholders are asking for one thing and the Government of Quebec, speaking as one, is incoherently saying the exact opposite? We must not forget that the social cost of unemployment was estimated and I am convinced that all parliamentarians are concerned about this situation.

I would like to remind you that we have, in Quebec, a very respectable and respected organization called the Forum pour l'emploi. Of course, this employment forum expressed the wish to see all manpower policies transferred to Quebec, but it also analyzed the social cost of unemployment. It estimated that—I know this will give you quite a shock, so I will say it slowly—the economic cost of unemployment for 1993, that is 1993 A.D., not 200 years ago, was about \$30 billion.

This means that, because the government is perhaps considering maintaining a duplication of structures, our society has to put up with a shortfall of \$30 billion. That is the reality. That is what is unbearable with Bill C-96. Not only will the government not respect the consensus that exists in Quebec, it included in the bill dispositions that will allow it to disregard the authority of the Quebec government and give direct funding to organizations like CDECs or direct it through other channels for the delivery of manpower related services, all this without going through the principal stakeholder, the Quebec government.

But that will not last long. Something will happen soon. There will be a grass-roots movement. People will take to the streets when they realize that we cannot support inefficiencies, that there is no reason to tolerate unemployment rates of 11, 12 or 13 per cent when other western societies are able to give work to everybody.

Since you are telling me that my time is up, Madam Speaker, I will conclude by saying that this bill is unacceptable and that we hope that the government will see the light and respect Quebec's jurisdictions.

**Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry-Prescott-Russell, Lib.):**  
Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure for me to make this speech immediately following the remarks of the hon. member for

Hochelaga-Maisonneuve. I listened very carefully to his remarks and now I would like to rectify a few things. I would like to show all our colleagues in this House, particularly members of the Bloc, that the adoption of Bill C-96 is part of a process that favours change and that supports the concept of partnerships with the provinces.

The leader of the Bloc said himself a while ago that he favoured change but wanted an agreement with the other provinces. I think this bill is very much in line with this idea. There is a partnership between the federal government and the provinces and, of course, there is change.

**(1155)**

Any motion aimed at delaying the adoption of this bill seems negative to me and, unfortunately, opposition members sometimes take a negative and very partisan attitude. This is the opinion I have of the members opposite. They are not as objective as some of us are. The bill we are proposing is about greater openness towards the provinces and a better sharing of responsibilities.

As the parliamentary secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the member for Parkdale-High Park, said so eloquently in the House and I quote: "Bill C-96 is not changing any statutory powers". Listen to this, Mr. Speaker. It comes from an authority on the subject. "It is not taking any powers away from Quebec or from any other province. This bill seeks to enable us to work together in order to deliver programs and services more efficiently at less cost to the taxpayers".

And now the member for Hochelaga-Maisonneuve is saying that the bill is useless unless it gives new legislative powers to the federal government. How can a member of the Bloc who favours decentralization oppose a bill because it does not centralize enough? He just told us that the bill is useless unless it provides for more centralization. The member may be a centralizing separatist, but not me.

We, in the Liberal Party, are in favour of a flexible federalism and, in this bill, we simply want to confirm the fact that there is now a minister who is responsible for several federal departments. This does not take any powers away from the provinces. Quite the contrary, this bill gives no power to the federal government that it did not already have, except that from now on these powers are in the hands of one minister instead of several.

Our government is deeply committed to reducing spending and this is why we wanted to reduce the number of ministers and consolidate some of the existing powers and federal departments. The powers transferred to the minister of Human Resources Development are not those of provincial ministers but they are part of powers that other federal departments already had et they are being consolidated.

I know that the hon. member for Hochelaga-Maisonneuve wishes to hear what I have to say and that he will listen carefully to my speech, so that he can be well informed and can vote for Bill C-96. I know that after hearing what I

have to say he will be able to change his mind. As I look at the hon. member for Hochelaga-Maisonneuve at this very moment I have no doubt that he is in the process of changing his mind. He may even be off to reconsider his position on the bill.

So, to put the excellent words of the parliamentary secretary I referred to earlier in a perspective even closer to reality, he declared that the Bloc members began by saying that the referendum had sent a clear message to the federal government. A very clear message indeed. It showed that a majority of Quebecers do not want separation. The parliamentary secretary went on to say that this was the clear message we received and that we had to work with that in mind.

This is what we intend to do and therefore we will respect, as we always have, the will of the people of Canada and, in particular, of Quebec. This is why we continue to offer good government to Canadians—those who live in Quebec and those who live elsewhere, of course.

**(1200)**

A few days ago, on November 20, 1995, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, said: "I draw the attention of the official opposition to recent post referendum polls, which state that 61 per cent of Quebecers want to remain in Canada and 78 per cent of Quebecers want to see major changes to the way the Canadian federation works". People want functional changes while remaining in Canada. That is what Quebecers want and we, of course, intend to respect that.

Today, we have before us a bill whose purpose is not to centralize but to consolidate into one department the work being done by different federal departments in order to improve government operations and to cut costs. "It is through bills such as this that hopefully through provincial federal co-operation we can get more people to work", said the hon. member for Parkdale-High Park.

On November 9, the Minister of Human Resources Development clearly addressed one of the essential impacts of this bill. He said and I quote: "- one of the direct results of the department will be to give far more space for provincial governments to begin to make decisions at their level of responsibility and jurisdiction. The time has come for us to take a much closer look at the respective roles and to build bridges to bring us together". That is what the minister said.

The opposition saw or pretended to see in Bill C-96 a move by the federal government to take over new powers. According to them, it is an intrusion in a provincial jurisdiction. In fact, the member for Hochelaga-Maisonneuve spoke to it earlier, and I know he is listening carefully.

The reality is quite different. For instance, one must examine the exact wording of clause 6 of the bill, which is in fact a restrictive clause. It sets limits to the powers vested in the minister by the bill. It clearly says that the

only issues concerned are those under the jurisdiction of Parliament. Again, the only issues concerned are those under the jurisdiction of this Parliament, period.

This clause applies to everything under the authority of the Department of Human Resources Development. Any existing statutory power will remain exactly the same after this bill is passed. I repeat for the member for Hochelaga-Maisonneuve, the same.

There is definitely no intrusion on areas of provincial jurisdiction: the bill forbids that. It is crystal clear. That being said, I am sure—maybe not sure, but I hope—that the Bloc members will change their mind and vote for the bill. I already see in the eyes of some of them that they are tempted to change their mind and suddenly vote for such a good bill.

**Mr. Pierre de Savoye (Portneuf, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, when I hear the member for Glengarry-Prescott-Russell telling us that it is crystal clear and explaining things at great length, with a certain sense of humour, I feel that, after all, the problem might lie in the very objective way he is looking at the situation, a liberal and objective way, I might add.

I will use the next few minutes to explain to my “objective” colleague a number of facts which might help him understand our huge reservations—I am quite sure that he is listening very carefully to my remarks and that he will take them into serious consideration.

Instead of being part of the solution, Bill C-96 makes the problem worse.

**(1205)**

Indeed, far from heralding the withdrawal of the federal government from manpower training, Bill C-96 reinforces the federal presence in this area. Duplications and inefficiencies resulting from this bill will grant the minister new powers, whether the objective member opposite likes it or not, new powers to negotiate directly with local governments or agencies, bypassing the provinces, which will enable him to set directions, standards and outcomes unilaterally.

The honourable government whip told us that clause 6 did not provide for new powers and that it defined and restricted them. Well then, let us have a look at clause 6. It reads:

The powers, duties and functions of the minister extend to and include all matters over which Parliament has jurisdiction—

Tell me, Mr. Speaker, is there any matter over which Parliament does not have jurisdiction, and which would not come under the laws of the land? Whatever goes on from sea to sea is regulated by this country's legislation and, consequently, is a matter over which Parliament has jurisdiction one way or another.

Not only are they not restricted, but they are incredibly increased. In fact, the powers, duties and functions of the minister are quite broad. Moreover, contrary to the present legislation, they are not specified, and we know that the federal government has a habit of intruding on matters of provincial jurisdiction. Therefore, there is cause for concern when you see the numerous jurisdictions of Parliament.

Let me quote the description of Human Resources Development Canada which is found in the Budget Plan tabled on February 27, 1995. It says: “Human Resources Development Canada administers unemployment insurance, income security programs for children and the elderly, the current federal programs of support to provinces for post-secondary education and welfare, labour market adjustment and social development programs, and student loans.”

What we see today, with Bill C-96, is a strengthening of the federal government's hold on each of these areas and on all of them collectively. I was listening earlier to the member who expressed some deep feelings about this. I remember that the Minister of Human Resources Development has told us repeatedly that we simply did not understand that things would be better. It seems the only ones who are optimistic about Bill C-96 are the government party and the minister.

I would like to refer to a press release issued by the Institut canadien d'éducation des adultes on October 5, 1995. It says that the Board of directors of the ICEA, formed of academic, labour and community representatives, is unanimously opposed to Bill C-96. The organization invites all its partners to mobilize and denounce that bill which undermines the equity principle governing our social security system in Canada and denies the exclusive jurisdiction of provinces over manpower training and development.

It is not a sovereigntist institute from Quebec which says that, it is the Institut canadien d'éducation des adultes. It seems that only the minister and the cabinet believe that Bill C-96 is a good thing. No, it is not a good thing. The same press release says: “Bill C-96 is, for the most part, one of the worst scenarios, something that our Institute denounced last fall, during the hearings of the Standing Committee on Human Resources Development.” This indicates not only that the minister consulted, but that he was told that this was the worst thing to do. And yet, he went ahead and did it.

I would also like to mention the position of the Quebec government, because I believe that our viewers should know what Quebec thinks of this intrusion.

**(1210)**

Mrs. Harel, the Quebec **Minister, said:** “When you read **Bill C-96, you understand why** the federal Minister of Human Resources Development did not respond, last spring, to my pressing demand for a federal-provincial conference on that reform. The bill is the opposite of the

Quebec consensus on manpower. The opposite of the single window principle. This is proof that the federal government is committed to continuing and even increasing the costly duplication and overlap in the area of manpower in Quebec”.

So, when the minister tells us, as he did during Question Period, “I consulted, I went to see my counterparts in the other provinces”, we can only say that as far as the Quebec minister is concerned this was not the case. Once again, we have a minister who is intruding on provincial areas of jurisdiction and in particular Quebec jurisdiction, in a dangerous manner.

I would also like to mention the SQDM. Yesterday during Question Period, the Minister of Human Resources Development said that during the summer he met, through officials, with representatives from the SQDM and that agreements had been signed. He implied that everything was fine. Yet, nothing could be further from the truth. On October 4, 1995, the SQDM stated its position on Bill C-96 in a press release and I quote: “The board members of the Société québécoise de développement de la main-d'oeuvre ask the federal government not to set up a parallel structure of partnership and not to take initiatives overlapping Quebec jurisdiction in the area of manpower development”.

Bill C-96 has catastrophic consequences. Starting with Mr. Valcourt, a former minister in the previous federal government, and now with the present minister, we are headed toward disaster in the area of manpower management.

In fact, in his recent report, the auditor general mentioned that job creation through the manpower development programs of our Canada Employment Centres was more costly in Quebec than elsewhere. Why? Why is it that the federal government is less efficient in Quebec than elsewhere? Simply because it stubbornly refuses to give Quebec all of the powers in this area.

To conclude, I would like to give specific examples affecting ordinary people. We are not talking about a piece of paper called a bill, but about real people suffering through real unemployment.

A few weeks ago, a woman who wanted to start her own business dropped by my office. There is a program called Self-Employment Assistance which would have allowed her, because she was receiving unemployment benefits, to start a business, to create jobs. Believe it or not, there is just enough money in this program to satisfy a handful of individuals in my own riding, and she was told to look for a job rather than to create one since, if she created one, she would no longer be eligible for unemployment insurance benefits. That is the great way unemployment is being perpetuated in Quebec. We prefer to give money to people to do nothing rather than help them create jobs for themselves and for others.

I will conclude on this note: I look forward to the day where a minister will have the courage to tell his or her civil servants that the federal government will no longer

interfere in the manpower area in Quebec and that it is going to give the province all of the powers in this field, which will result in huge savings. We will, at last, be able to create the jobs that everybody needs.

**Mrs. Christiane Gagnon (Québec, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, as the saying goes, the proof is in the pudding. Let me tell you that I believe this hold true for what the Chrétien government intends to do with regard to social program reform, especially unemployment insurance.

Contrary to the fine promises which were uttered with a hand on one's heart, contrary to the statements of love and respect made in a none too subtle way in Montreal, the federal government is preparing to circumvent the will of Quebecers in a vital sector, that is to say training and labour programs.

(1215)

Once again this government which claims to be in favour of a decentralization of powers is preparing to grab greater powers by means of the administrative restructuring of the Department of Human Resources Development Canada, which is the purpose of Bill-96.

Unfortunately this is not a coincidence since the same thing happened with other departments. This is the case for example of the Department of Health and the Department of Canadian Heritage. I have already condemned the same underhanded tactics used by the government in those cases.

In the bill before us, that deals with the Department of Human Resources Development, the minister gives himself an enormous power that will extend to all areas relating to manpower.

As we are now able to really identify the government's huge appetite, members of the Bloc Québécois want to alert public opinion in both Canada and Quebec. Bill C-96 contains a key section, that is, section 6, which reads as follows:

The powers, duties and functions of the Minister extend to and include all matters over which Parliament has jurisdiction relating to the development of the human resources of Canada not by law assigned to any other Minister, department, board or agency of the Government of Canada, and are to be exercised with the objective of enhancing employment, encouraging equality and promoting social security.

This section contains all the potential sources of major conflict between the provinces and especially between Quebec and the federal government. Indeed, it is important as this moment to go back in time and to point out clearly that the federal government, after some unfortunate procedures before the Privy Council and to the great displeasure of the provinces, obtained constitutional jurisdiction only over unemployment insurance. It is because of its strange and omnipotent spending power that it has invaded manpower training and that it now wants to get into the field of equality and social security.

I am not making this up; it is clearly set out in section 6 of the bill. This further intrusion is very badly orchestrated and has been denounced by many stakeholders, both sovereignist and federalist, such as the Société québécoise de développement de la main-d'oeuvre, the Canadian Labour Congress, the Canadian Institute of Adult Education and the Quebec Minister of Employment.

I would also remind the House that, historically and constantly, all Quebec spokespersons on this issue have denounced federal interference in manpower training. What will provincial organizations and governments think of this new federal intrusion in an exclusively provincial jurisdiction? I am sure that reactions are currently negative, will be negative and will soon be made known. They will follow Quebec's claims. Will they have the good fortune of influencing the direction that the current government has set for itself? I have my doubts about that. This is a very unfortunate situation because this new constitutional snag goes against the interests of the population.

In a document called "Un Québec pour l'emploi", which he published this year, Pierre Paquette analyzes the requirements for a full employment policy in modern Quebec. Mr. Paquette, who has been secretary general of the CNTU for five years, has also sat on the board of directors of the Economic Council of Canada and on committees to kick-start the economy and stimulate employment in the southwest and east end of Montreal. He identifies three major elements of a comprehensive employment strategy.

The first element is all the actions that have a bearing on economic growth factors, including both individual corporate policies and social economic policies affecting all of society as well as the international community. The second element is the link between sectoral and regional development policies as part of an industrial policy. The third and last element stresses the importance of implementing a whole series of active manpower initiatives including professional training, placement, specific measures for disadvantaged groups and regions, and reducing the number of hours of work in all its forms.

You may have noted that all these areas come under exclusive provincial jurisdiction. Mr. Paquette goes on to say, "Effective implementation of a comprehensive full employment strategy requires a strong social consensus. In this regard, it is hard to imagine how the various social stakeholders across Canada could agree on the implementation of a full employment policy".

**(1220)**

This conclusion is clear and explicit. As we have said a thousand times in this House, there is a consensus in Quebec that this government persists in ignoring with impunity.

The people of Quebec reject Bill C-96. They reject this counterproductive approach, which, far from giving them concerted access to the work place, keeps them a little further away.

In closing, I would like to make a suggestion to the government, which, until the next referendum on Quebec's future, will at least allow the people to benefit from their contributions to both levels of government.

I would suggest that the federal government should withdraw completely from all employment, manpower, social assistance and training matters. At the same time, I would suggest that the federal government should transfer to the government closest to the people, the provincial government, the money needed to put in place a real full employment policy, as the Quebec government wishes. This will demonstrate concretely the government's commitment to the equality and social security it refers to in clause 6 of its bill. I thank you and I hope that this government has heard my message.

**Mr. René Laurin (Joliette, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the federal government promised Quebecers that many things would change if they voted no in the October 30, 1995, referendum.

A mere three weeks after the referendum, Quebecers are already getting a taste of changes to come as the Minister of Human Resources Development presents Bill C-96 to merge four departments into a single one. But at the same time, as could be expected, he gives himself broader powers, continues to invade provincial jurisdictions and goes against the quasi unanimous consensus in Quebec on this issue.

Back in 1991, the Bourassa government was asking that Quebec be responsible for all expenditures relating to manpower development, including training. At the time, Mr. Bourbeau, the minister responsible, had written his federal counterpart a very clear letter on this subject.

Time and time again, the Quebec national assembly requested almost unanimously that Ottawa withdraw from this provincial area of jurisdiction. After this bill was introduced, several major stakeholders in Quebec made representations against the HRD minister's centralizing designs. For example, the Société québécoise de développement de la main-d'oeuvre takes issue with the government repeatedly trying to interfere in provincial areas of jurisdiction.

According to the SQDM, clauses 6 and 20 of Bill C-96 would empower the Minister of Human Resources Development to enter into agreements with a province, a group of provinces, agencies of provinces, financial institutions and such other persons or bodies as the minister considers appropriate, to improve the labour market and promote equality and social security.

In so doing, the minister blatantly violates provincial jurisdiction and goes directly against Prime Minister Chrétien's promises of decentralization during the referendum campaign. These promises were short-lived. When questioned on this by the Bloc Québécois, the minister said, with rare degree of arrogance, that the opposition had obviously not even bothered to read the bill.

(1225)

Not only must this bill be read line by line, it must also be read between the lines. One must do more than read the bill, and when that happens, one realizes that it is totally different from what it appears to be, because it allows the federal government to interfere in areas of provincial jurisdiction.

In response to another question from the Leader of the Opposition, the minister answered that he felt that the hon. member had strayed substantially from the line of logic and reason. That attitude shows clearly that the minister does not understand the issue and that he insults every Quebec stakeholder opposed to the new bill.

Even the Conseil du patronat, and this is quite something because that staunch supporter of federalism rarely agrees with the Bloc's philosophy, is asking the minister to amend, if not withdraw, Bill C-96.

With the rapid development of new technologies and the globalization of markets, Quebec industry must quickly adapt to meet the new challenges of the world economy. Manpower training plays a vital role in ensuring that our workers are familiar with state-of-the-art technology and can meet the needs of the Quebec labour market.

Currently, there are close to 70,000 jobs which are available in Quebec but remain unfilled because adequate occupational training was not provided. The Quebec government recently introduced legislation to encourage companies to offer more in-house training.

However, a lot remains to be done and, without total control in that sector, the provincial government cannot adequately meet the expectations of the Quebec labour market. The federal and provincial governments are always competing to show workers which of the two levels of government can best meet their expectations and aspirations.

When that happens, it costs millions of dollars in unnecessary duplication. Such duplication costs several hundreds of millions in the manpower training sector, and that is a real shame. For example, in the Eastern Townships, for every dollar spent on manpower training, 42 cents go to administrative costs. Over 40 per cent, more specifically 42 per cent, of the amount which should be used for manpower development is used instead to pay for course organization, promotional efforts and course delivery. This is an incredible waste of energy and money.

Unfortunately, Quebec workers are the ones who are affected by the stubbornness of the federal government and of its Minister of Human Resources Development. Moreover, since the 1990 UI reform, the federal government has been making extensive use of the UI fund for training purposes.

(1230)

In 1994-95, \$531 million were spent for that purpose. The federal department now offers 27 initiatives or programs, most of which create duplication with the 22 programs offered by the SQDM and others offered by various departments.

In 1994, the federal government announced the creation of Youth Service, at a cost of \$175 million. This program is entirely comparable to the Volunteer Youth Action Program which is efficiently run by the SQDM. In spite of repeated demands by the Quebec government, the federal government keeps refusing to transfer funds into the provincial program, thus wasting money because of duplication.

Another equally pathetic example is the federal program that matches another similar Quebec program called Jeunes stagiaires. The 50 Canadian sectorial skills council, set up in 1992, are another case of duplication, considering the 15 Quebec manpower sector committees which have been in place for more than five years. The federal government will spend more than \$250 million to set up its own councils. Finally, because of the rigid standards for POWA, the federal government has failed to compensate many garment sector workers.

In view of the difficulties some workers were experiencing, the Quebec government, through the SQDM, had to step in to make up for the federal government's shortcomings. There again, we have duplication. What a waste of money and time. The cost of all this duplication is estimated at \$250 million a year. That is poor management and poor efficiency.

In conclusion, I would say that federal intrusion in the area of human resources development since 1942 is one more example of its abuse of the spending power and of its disregard for the exclusive jurisdictions of the Quebec government. Constitutionally, the provinces have exclusive jurisdiction over manpower training, but, to this day, the stubbornness of the federal government still undermines the development of the Quebec economy.

Vocational training is the cornerstone of competitiveness and availability of highly skilled workers, two assets that are essential if we are to develop a high technology economy, attract many investors and produce value added goods.

This minister and his government should stop all this nonsense and give back to Quebecers all the tools they need to deal with after manpower training. Bill C-96 should therefore be withdrawn, and the Prime Minister should start to deliver on his decentralization promises in areas where a strong consensus exists in Quebec.

**Mrs. Maud Debien (Laval East, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, not long ago, I read the speech the Minister of Human Resources Development made during second reading of Bill C-96. This bill, entitled an Act to establish the Department of Human Resources Development and to



amend and repeal certain related Acts, certainly stems from a noble intent.

When I read this speech, I got the feeling that we were taking part in a huge change operation, a bit like the edifying commitments the Liberals make to try to make us swallow the pill. The minister said, and I quote: "a new, innovative way of doing government, to get people to begin to think differently about how government can relate to individuals, to provide a much more effective way of enabling people to respond and make choices themselves and not have choices made for them, to share, to create partnerships, to get away from the top down command system and to turn that into a Canadian Tire philosophy based in the local communities with tools and instruments customized and tailored to the needs of those communities."

One could think that the minister is talking about real decentralization and is about to comply once and for all with the repeated and urgent requests of the province of Quebec for control over the policies and programs concerning manpower and training.

**(1235)**

However, the minister warned us right from the start. "It is, he said, decentralization of a very different kind."

The minister then said: "There has been a lot of talk about decentralization. So far it has been a somewhat restricted debate as it talks only about decentralization in terms of transferring from the federal government to provincial governments." And this is very significant. The message here is clear. The kind of decentralization the minister is bragging about has nothing to do with Quebec's expectations and ignores the consensus that was reached in Quebec over manpower training.

Let us look at this a little bit closer. Even though the prime minister told us, in answer to our questions, that the official opposition had obviously not bothered to read Bill C-96, we have to conclude that several individuals, institutions and organizations in Quebec are really ignorant, according to the prime minister. Unfortunately for him, the people of Quebec also know how to read between the lines.

It is appalling but not really surprising to see that Bill C-96 goes totally against the large consensus reached in Quebec over manpower issues. For several years now, all those involved in Quebec's labour force have agreed to demand the repatriation to Quebec of all manpower training programs and of the related budgets.

Far from abiding by this unanimous consent, the federal government has announced its intent to continue with and even increase all of the costly duplication and overlap. Once again, the Liberal government ignores its own basic rule. Yet, the Canadian Constitution 1867 recognizes clearly and explicitly the areas of provincial jurisdiction. But for years now the federal government has been using its spending power and its authority to impose national standards and to infringe upon the jurisdictions of the

provinces. All that Bill C-96 does is legalizing a de facto situation.

Whatever the Prime Minister says, we did read this bill, and it was easy for us to grab its real intent. For example, clauses 6, 20 and 21 are unequivocal.

Clause 6 aims at extending federal jurisdiction by expanding the powers, duties and functions of the Minister. Clause 20 provides that the Minister may negotiate and enter into agreements with, and I quote: "such other persons or bodies as the Minister considers appropriate."

In the same vein, clause 21 reiterates that the Minister may authorize any other person or body to exercise any power or perform any duty or function of the Minister.

All that to make sure we understand that the Minister has no obligation to consult or agree with the provinces in precise areas of provincial jurisdiction.

Indeed, from now on, according to Bill C-96, the department of Human Resources Development will be authorized to by-pass the provinces and impose manpower standards and policies. It will be able to develop a parallel federal structure to intervene on the Quebec labour market.

The federal government is empowering itself to by-pass the provinces and to intervene directly with bodies, municipal governments and individuals. While the Constitution gives provinces power over manpower development and vocational training, the federal government has chosen to ignore it.

So history repeats itself. It will be remembered that, in 1991, the previous Conservative government tried to encroach upon provincial jurisdiction and directly interfere in matters regarding vocational training and manpower. Once again, Quebec unanimously denounced these centralizing and unconstitutional moves by the federal government.

The Quebec Liberal Party and the Conseil du patronat du Québec added their voice to this denunciation. The same centralizing designs, which are spelled out in Bill C-96, are now giving rise to the same denunciations everywhere in Quebec. The initiative is, however, more subtle this time, because it comes a few days after the referendum.

**(1240)**

While the Liberals spoke of nothing but change during the referendum campaign, there are now, with Bill C-96, attempting further intrusion in the area of training.

The Canadian provinces have different labour markets. A centralized and uniform approach would hardly help anyone. The result would be more red tape, as my colleague for Joliette clearly demonstrated earlier.

Let us not forget that Quebec already has established manpower networks. The Société québécoise de développement de la main-d'oeuvre is a special form of partnership involving all Quebec stakeholders in manpower matters, whether they are employers, unions, co-operatives, educators or community groups. Quebecers know better than anyone else what is good for them. Quebecers must decide what their manpower policies should be and set their own priorities.

This is not a symbolic demand or the confirmation of a historic right. It is only a matter of good old common sense for those who take to heart the promotion and the support of manpower development. If there really is a will to change and to decentralize in Canada, as we were told during the referendum campaign, this is the time for the winds to blow.

If Bill C-96 is a proof of the flexibility the Liberal government boasts about, if it is indicative of the rejection of, and I quote the minister of Human Resources Development, "the old top down centralized hierarchies of governmental organization, which have been really a product of the old industrial age", then, it is a total failure.

Bill C-96 sends a clear message to the Quebec Liberal Party, to the Conseil du patronat and to all other partners in the field of employment in Quebec, and it is that the federal government will never accept that Quebec assume sole responsibility for manpower training within its territory. Ottawa will never accept either that Quebec repatriate the funds that the federal government allocates to manpower training programs. Quebecers will clearly see that it is impossible to develop a Quebec manpower policy suited to its realities and administered by Quebec if they stay in Canada. That will only be possible in a sovereign Quebec.

Therefore, I urge all members of Parliament who really care for the improvement of relations between the two founding peoples of this country to support the amendment proposed by the hon. member for Mercier and to vote against Bill C-96.

**Mr. Patrick Gagnon (Parliamentary Secretary to Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in fact, the bill has nothing to do with jurisdictions. It has everything to do with people. It is aimed at helping Canadians and, of course, Quebecers in remote areas to find jobs.

The bill is designed to allow young people, older workers, single mothers and low income individuals to acquire the skills they need in our ever-changing economy. It is also aimed at bringing communities, businesses and all levels of government together to look at the human aspect of regional economic development.

This means that other forms of agreements and partnerships between the federal government and the provinces are possible. Quebec talked a lot about partnership during the referendum campaign and we are willing to go in this direction. As a matter of fact, partnerships with local and regional economic development authorities in the area of

social and labour programs are highly desirable. That is certainly the way to go.

If we really want to pursue this discussion in a positive manner, it is important that we adopt this bill now and start working towards establishing new and improved partnerships with one another.

While some members are worrying about the federal government taking powers away from the provinces, the Department of Human Resources Development is doing its job with Quebecers and, of course, with the Quebec government. Using jurisdictional considerations as an excuse, members of the Bloc would want us to do nothing. Let us say this: in the name of the progress and of the changes that are obviously wanted in Quebec, let us find better ways of doing our job.

(1245)

Canadians, as well as Quebecers, are well aware that the federal government has a legitimate role to play in development and manpower. So let us get things straight.

We had a case, the other day, that showed the urgent need for federal involvement, through its agencies, its community development organizations which play an active role in every regional county municipality and through the Federal Office of Regional Development, which is always there to give a welcome and desirable helping hand to stimulate small businesses in Quebec. There are other examples, such as the Federal Business Development Bank. When there is a need for a partner, to set up a small business in Quebec, especially in remote areas, this additional financial help from the federal government is always welcome.

I would like to talk about a particular case that occurred in my county a few weeks ago. Throughout the referendum campaign in the riding of Bonaventure, the minister of agriculture, who happens to be my provincial MNA in Quebec City, asked for the participation of the federal government in order to stimulate, or create if you will, a dairy industry in Gaspésie. Following pressure from that minister, it was agreed that the federal government would invest in the establishment of a cheese-making operation in that region. Now, the day after the referendum, that very same minister who had challenged us to invest reneged. He decided, on the basis of provincial programs and on the advice of his provincial bureaucrats, that the agreement was no longer valid. I find that most unfortunate, but fortunately the federal government remains present even if the Government of Quebec went back on its commitment to develop an important industry in Quebec, and especially in my region which is said to be a depressed area.

The federal government is also committed to helping people who are victims of particular circumstances that do not apply only to one province. This is the case of senior workers whose jobs are being jeopardized by the restructuring of the economy. It is also the case of some workers in fisheries. We have all heard about TAGS. In Quebec \$100 million was spent to support those who were

hard hit by that moratorium. There are still considerable investments being made to find new markets for underdeveloped species. As we know, however, fortunately it is the federal government that manages fisheries in the Gulf and elsewhere, but once the fish gets to the docks it is the responsibility of the province from then on. It is then up to Quebec to issue fish processing plant operating permits, but unfortunately Quebec is still refusing to invest the amounts necessary to give our local entrepreneurs a chance to diversify, particularly into underdeveloped species such as mackerel and herring.

There are lots of similar examples in Quebec, unfortunately demonstrating Quebec's intransigence and the fact that it is not necessarily attuned to the true needs of the population. When I heard the opposition saying "All we want is decentralization, all we want is for Quebec to make a final decision", were they referring only to the SQDM? Mention has never been made of the fact that there are people who are what the Bloc would probably call "Quebecers of the majority", old-stock Quebecers, working for the federal public service, who come from the Magdalen Islands, Bonaventure of course, or elsewhere in Quebec, and that these people are seeking, not only as federal employees, but as concerned individuals, to provide the public with proper services.

(1250)

And in all the speeches I have heard this morning, there was not a single member of the Bloc, not a single member of the opposition, came forward with a good idea. The only thing that was said is that everything that happening in Quebec at this time is the federal government's fault. What I find regrettable, however, is that no one is listening to the voice of the people. There is already talk of a third referendum in Quebec. Mr. Speaker, let me state here to you, here before my constituents, before eastern Quebec, before all Quebecers, that the winning side this past October 30 was the no side.

I believe that what will be expected of the outgoing Leader of the Opposition, when he is premier of Quebec as he surely will be—and let me, in passing, wish him luck—is a commitment. He must make a commitment. In fact, he did, and people in the PQ government have announced they are prepared to work together with the Canadian government. I think Quebecers are fed up with constitutional discussions that fail to provide any answers. We want to put Quebecers back to work, and this will happen within the Canadian federation.

Throughout the referendum campaign, we made it clear that if Quebec left Canada, it would lose several billion dollars worth of federal investment. Losses would be considerable and would be felt by everyone, but especially by the most vulnerable people in the province of Quebec. I think we have reached a point in our history where we should look at what we have in common, instead of being divided and dwelling on the past like the Leader of the Opposition did throughout the last referendum campaign.

I challenge the future Premier of Quebec and members of the opposition to lay down their arms and say: "We are

willing to work with everyone. We are willing to work with the federal government, the municipalities and, of course, the other provinces". I think it is really too bad that the Quebec government, which claims to be anxious to promote regional economic development, tends to boycott agreements and federal-provincial meetings and conferences.

I think that is too bad, and it is unfortunate that in several sectors, including fisheries and agri-food and agriculture, we see this refusal to meet Minister Tobin and officials and ministers from the other Canadian provinces. I think the Quebec government and especially members opposite will have to consider that people want development, but not if it means Quebec has to separate, not if it means breaking up and destroying the country.

I think that people, especially in Quebec, want to build a fair and credible society, and this will happen within the Canadian federation. In concluding, I would urge opposition members to suggest alternatives, to work with us, but even more important, to work with and for their constituents. I am convinced and confident that their constituents feel it is up to them to work with us to strengthen the economy of Quebec and Canada.

**Mr. Antoine Dubé (Lévis, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, before he leaves, I would like to congratulate the member for Bonaventure-Îles-de-la-Madeleine for having successfully enlivened the debate this morning to some extent on that side of the House, because, up to now, things were pretty quiet.

**Mr. Gagnon:** True. True.

**Mr. Dubé:** He encouraged us to pay attention to and analyze the outcome of the referendum. I would like to return to his recommendation, and look at the outcome of the referendum in his riding. In his own riding—Bonaventure-Îles-de-la-Madeleine—as he knows, it was not the no vote that won, but the yes. So, if he truly spoke for the people of his riding, he would be saying something different. It appears he did not listen carefully. Too bad for him.

I, however, remember. I have listened carefully to most of the speeches by the member for Bonaventure-Îles-de-la-Madeleine. I remember him from when I was a brand new member. There was a debate on the famous ferry that would run between the Magdalen Islands and Prince Edward Island. The solutions proposed by the Government of Quebec were not particularly to his liking. He said: "I will listen to what my people have to say, and, you watch, we will come up with a solution".

(1255)

The solution the federal government came up with was to buy a secondhand boat from somewhere else, rather than have a new boat built. Since then, the president of the Société de transport des Îles-de-la-Madeleine has been running around after secondhand boats, with \$30 million of federal money. Recently, someone said on his behalf, a

representative of the Société said: "Unfortunately, the federal government took so long in the matter, I missed an opportunity. The boat was sold elsewhere. There are no more secondhand boats for sale".

Meanwhile, I know, because we are talking about real problems, we are not talking Constitution, we are talking jobs, I am the member for Lévis, where the Chantier maritime de Lévis is located, and where workers at MIL Davie remember what the member for Bonaventure-Îles-de-la-Madeleine said: "A second hand boat rather than a new one". Hundreds of unemployed workers remember that.

I listen to them and I say to the member, because sometimes we have to raise our voices so the member opposite understands: Not only did you not listen to the people of Lévis, you did not even listen to the people of the Magdalen Islands.

Before you warn me about the relevance of my remarks, Mr. Speaker, I will return to Bill C-96.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger):** I simply want to put you at ease. It has nothing to do with relevance. You should, however, always address your comments to the chair, and not directly to each other.

**Mr. Dubé:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You understand that we cannot always resist temptation. I have every intention of following your rules, which I graciously accept because of my great respect for your position.

The hon. member for Bonaventure-Îles-de-la-Madeleine, for example, wonders what the official opposition is worried about, arguing that this bill will not broaden the human resources development minister's jurisdiction.

Not only is the hon. member for Bonaventure-Îles-de-la-Madeleine not listening, but he has apparently not read the bill. What does the bill do? It expands the Department of Human Resources Development. It must be realized that, if we take away the money allocated to debt servicing, it almost exceeds 50 per cent of the federal budget. That is quite something.

It includes the old employment department, the labour department. It is responsible for old age pensions. On this subject, I simply wish to remind the hon. member for Bonaventure-Îles-de-la-Madeleine about the debate surrounding the replacement of many employment centres with computer terminals.

As one who listens to citizens and to seniors in particular—and I know that all members on this side of the House have heard them—, I can tell you that they are concerned. They are not used to typing on computer terminals to get information. They are very concerned about this. The government is saying that they are moving their services closer to the people, but installing a computer terminal in a municipal location is not the way to go.

My main concern—and that is clear from the debate today—is that Bill C-96 will enable the federal government to deal directly with agencies and individuals in matters coming under the exclusive jurisdiction of the provinces like postsecondary education, security and manpower training. It is certainly not a case of jurisdictions being unclear.

The hon. member for Bonaventure-Îles-de-la-Madeleine suggested that we look ahead not back. I would actually encourage him to go back to the Canadian Constitution and read it over. The Constitution states that these areas are indeed areas of exclusive provincial jurisdiction.

The hon. member closed by saying: "Let the members of the Bloc Québécois and the Parti Québécois, the people of Quebec and the Société québécoise de développement de la main-d'oeuvre come and help us, the federal government, to do what we have set out to do, so that it can be better done, in partnership".

He got it all wrong. It should be just the opposite. The federal government should be the one trying to help provincial governments in exercising their exclusive jurisdictions. That is what decentralization should be about. It should not be about the federal government decentralizing its action by going over the heads of the provinces to deal with agencies, businesses and individuals. This is not decentralizing. It is by-passing, going over the heads of the provinces. That is not the same thing, and it certainly does not qualify as decentralization.

On the contrary, that is centralizing. You keep the money, spend it according to certain rules or national standards and go over the heads of the provinces to deal directly with businesses and individuals in areas of provincial jurisdiction.

### (1300)

The past often gives us an indication of what the future holds. I will not go very far back in time. I will focus on the past couple of years. As the opposition's critic for training and youth, I would like to remind the House of a bill I mentioned a number of times already to give you an idea of what the minister has in mind when he talks about decentralizing. I am referring to the infamous Bill C-28 that the House passed on June 23, 1994. What is so special about this bill that the Minister of Human Resources Development is responsible for? Subsection 3(1) states that, from now on, the HRD minister will designate himself appropriate educational authorities for the provinces, which flies in the face of the Constitution. I say it again because people have to understand. Over time, people may forget the connection between certain legislative measures passed by the government. Bill C-28 is an example of a case where the federal government ignored the provinces.

Subsection 14(7) states that Quebec can opt out, with financial compensation, like before, provided that its program meets every requirement and that each of its components is similar to that of the federal program.

The Quebec government is free to do what it wants and, yes, will even get money. However, that money, which, incidentally, comes from Quebecers who pay 24 per cent of their taxes to Ottawa, will only be paid provided certain conditions are met. In other words, Quebec is free to do what it wants, but if it does not do this or that, the federal government will cut funding. What a nice way to view decentralization, this in a field of provincial jurisdiction. Such is the spirit that guides this government.

I followed every initiative of the minister regarding his employment development strategy for young people. One must admit that, in the two-year period, it has not met with much success. The figures for the last two months show that the unemployment rate for the under-25 group is exactly the same as it was two years ago, when the minister took office. This is quite the strategy.

My limited studies in political science have taught me that a political or administrative strategy was good to the extent that it produced results. Otherwise, the strategy was not good and had to be changed. I invite the Minister of Human Resources Development to change his strategy for helping young people find jobs. At the moment, he is in the process of trying to duplicate Quebec provincial programs at the federal level. For example his Youth Service Canada is identical in every respect to the Quebec program Jeunes Volontaires. He has tried something involving work placements as well, but these are things that have already been done by the Government of Quebec and the Société québécoise de la main-d'oeuvre.

During the referendum campaign, Quebecers heard and saw all this, with training and employability enhancement programs that change daily, but the last time I looked there were 102 federal and provincial programs. The total has even gone as high as 108, but a few were combined after that. It is still a huge number, and people cannot find their way around all these programs.

A number of stakeholders in the Société québécoise de la main-d'oeuvre, including Mr. Béland, the president of the Confédération des caisses populaires et d'économie Desjardins du Québec, the FTQ, labour federations, and the Conseil du Patronat as well, have been unanimous in demanding that the federal government pull out of this area. Despite their repeated demands, however—and this is where there is a danger when it comes to public opinion—there is a certain fatigue setting in and the strategy of the government across the way, apart from answering questions asked during question period, is to pretend that everything is rosy. No reaction. Total silence. No problem. With time, people are saying, “Maybe the Bloc MPs will get fed up. Anyway, it is a temporary party only”. They are aware that we are in existence for a limited time, but that time is a bit longer than planned, and we continue to keep our shoulders to the wheel, to be vigilant, tenacious, persevering, keeping on our toes, and it is our intention to remain that way. We will continue until the Quebec consensus concerning manpower is satisfied with the federal government's actions.

(1305)

**Mr. André Caron (Jonquière, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I welcome this opportunity to join my fellow Bloc members in speaking to Bill C-96, an act to establish the Department of Human Resources Development and to amend and repeal certain related acts.

As my colleagues explained earlier, this is an important bill. Last week when we were debating the amendment of the hon. member for Mercier, government members said that the bill simply grouped certain components without introducing any new elements. They told us not to worry. They said that the federal government would keep up the good work in the provinces and municipalities for the benefit of Canadians, and that basically, there was very little to get upset about. They assumed that the referendum was partly to blame that it was nothing very serious.

I would like to point out that the opposition of the Bloc Québécois to this bill is fundamental. This bill goes to the very heart of a certain definition, a particular vision of Canadian federalism. First of all, the Department of Human Resources Development. As the hon. member for Lévis said earlier, this is a very important department. It is responsible for unemployment insurance, old age security, education and transfers to the provinces for social assistance, and it has a budget that is probably second only to the budget for servicing Canada's debt.

This department is a giant that is able to intervene in areas which it assumes are under its jurisdiction. It can intervene effectively because it has the resources. Over the years, the department has developed a mandate for intervention. Consider unemployment insurance, which required an amendment to the Canadian Constitution. Consider old age security, family allowances and federal assistance to the provinces for post-secondary education. Gradually, over the past 15, 20, 30 or 50 years, this department, or should I say its predecessor departments which it has now absorbed, have spearheaded a Canadian vision of social policy.

If we recall what happened when Canada was founded in 1867, simply put, there was a division of powers, as is normal under a federal system. The federal government had its powers and the provinces had theirs, and anyone who bothers to read the Constitution will see that areas with a more immediate impact on people, such as health, education, and social assistance, were a provincial responsibility, while foreign affairs, the economy, the armed forces and other areas of a more financial or economic nature were the responsibility of the federal government.

As I just said, over the years we have seen the federal government increasingly invade the jurisdictions of the provinces. So much so that today, we are considering a bill that will provide a rationale for the federal government's presence in provincial jurisdictions. I realize some people will say this may be normal, that federalism has evolved and change is necessary, that certain problems must be dealt with and that this should be done by the level of government best equipped to do so.

**(1310)**

This is a bit what the bill says. The Minister of Human Resources Development may, at his pleasure, intervene, according to clause 6, in: “-all matters over which Parliament has jurisdiction relating to the development of the human resources of Canada”. Admittedly, this is very broad. The department may enter into agreements involving employment, encourage equality and promote social security. In the present context, members will agree that this is very broad indeed.

We in the Bloc feel that the department is using this bill to acquire legislative jurisdiction to define policy in areas of provincial jurisdiction. What is the effect of the federal government's approach? It could be dramatic, given that Quebec, Ontario and the other provinces also operate in these areas.

The Government of Quebec is involved in health, education, social and employment matters in these jurisdictions. It has defined its programs. It has set up departments. It has activities planned in these areas. We note, in the bill before us, that the federal government is giving itself the right to intervene in these areas.

Perhaps it wants to intervene with the best of intentions, but, in practical terms, two levels of government are operating in the same areas with programs that often compete with or overlap each other. My colleague mentioned there are currently more than 100 programs, either federal or provincial, aimed at meeting objectives in the social, educational or employment fields.

So we end up with two levels of government that, in a way, knock each other out of commission, not out of ill will, but because of the very nature of the political structure defining the programs and objectives. What we see in Quebec, what I have noticed in my riding, is that there were provincial policies, co-ordinated primarily by the SQDM, the Société québécoise de développement de la main-d'oeuvre, and there were federal policies from the employment centres and the Department of Human Resources Development.

When we think about the section 25 program from unemployment insurance, the job readiness programs and the special programs of certain agencies to help specific clientele, we realize that everyone's intentions are good. However, we also realize there is often inefficiency, which the Minister of Human Resources Development himself admits. Yesterday, during question period, he in fact said that he wanted to make changes in Canada and in his policies, because he could see over the past two years that the policies were ineffective.

So we end up with two levels of government that, in a way, pursue ineffective policies, precisely because these policies overlap and cancel each other out. The Bloc Québécois's argument against this bill is that there should be a single level of government dealing with these issues.

If we look at the Canadian Constitution, we see that these programs should come under provincial jurisdiction. So we

in Quebec asked the federal government to withdraw from these programs and transfer responsibility to the Quebec government. The other provinces do not, of course, want these powers, but we in Quebec want to be in charge of these programs because of our history, because the Quebec government is the government of a people, a nation distinct from Canadian society.

This has been a Quebec demand for 30 years, going back to Mr. Lesage, Mr. Johnson, Mr. Bourassa, Mr. Lévesque. This is a constant demand. We have always come up against a brick wall. If the federal government had acted in good faith, Canada might have achieved some form of asymmetrical federalism allowing Quebec to put forward its policies and to feel respected, while the other provinces could have enjoyed greater centralization and carried out programs benefiting their labour force, something that we do not have in Canada at the present time.

**(1315)**

This is the brick wall we have come up against in recent years, whether at the Quebec government or the federal government level. This situation has come about because the federal government has refused for 30 years to accommodate the specific demands made by all Quebec governments for 50 years, going back to Maurice Duplessis.

I call on all members to reject this bill at second reading so that the jurisdiction of each level of government in the Canadian federation can be respected.

**Mr. Osvaldo Nunez (Bourassa, BQ):** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Milliken:** What a pleasure.

**Mr. Nunez:** If the hon. member opposite will give me a chance, I would like to take part in this debate today on Bill C-96 to legally establish the Department of Human Resources Development.

As I said in my remarks on November 20, this bill accentuates the federal presence by giving the minister new powers, including the power to bypass provincial authorities and negotiate directly with local authorities and agencies. I denounce, once again, the federal government's centralizing designs. As you know, there is a strong consensus in Quebec on the need to have control over manpower training programs. This is an area where there is a great deal of duplication and overlap, which is proving to be extremely costly and inefficient.

Just to show how inefficient the federal government is, and this department in particular, the report tabled by the Auditor General of Canada two days ago, on November 21, is very critical of the manpower training programs, describing these programs as ill-suited to industry's needs. An estimated 300,000 positions remained vacant every year between 1988 and 1990 because suitable incumbents could not be found, but the training programs offered by the

department related to only 5 per cent of these vacant positions. To be facing that kind of a problem when unemployment is on the rise is incredible. The federal government's inefficiency and squandering in this regard has to be denounced. The Department of Human Resources Development spends \$2 billion a year on manpower training.

The auditor finds that there is no systematic or global measure to deal with the situation.

I also want to point out that clause 6 of Bill C-96 authorizes the minister to bypass provinces and establish direct links with financial institutions, local organizations and such other persons or bodies as he considers appropriate, "with the objective of enhancing employment, encouraging equality and promoting social security". Moreover, the minister may authorize "any other person or body" to exercise his powers. That provision opens the door to the contracting-out and privatization of employment services, something which is already illustrated by the streamlining of the federal network of employment centres.

The bill also provides that the Canada Employment and Insurance Commission may "authorize any person or body to exercise powers or perform duties and functions of the Commission". Under subsection 31(3) of the former act, the commission could only delegate its powers to members of its staff or, subject to the minister's approval, to members of the department. Thus, the commission will enjoy a power to delegate similar to that of the minister. This is the same minister who is about to announce additional cuts of \$1.25 billion in the UI program. That is a lot of money.

In spite of the fact that the public service, the crown corporations and the private sector are all experiencing cuts, closures and massive layoffs, Bill C-96 is silent on job creation.

**(1320)**

Let me give a few examples of such cuts. First, by 1997, Bell Canada will have closed nine regional offices in Quebec alone. It also intends to close three auditing offices.

That company, which employs 46,000 people, hopes to layoff 10,000 of them over the next three years. A large number of these people are members of the Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union of Canada. This is a 22 per cent reduction of the company's staff. Bell has 28,606 employees in Ontario and 17,300 in Quebec. It intends to reduce its staff through voluntary termination of employment, early retirement and outright layoffs. It should be noted that Bell cannot justify such major cuts, given the huge profits generated last year. Moreover, during the first six months of 1995, the company paid \$35 million in dividends, which is as much as it did for the same period last year.

Recently, a group of Bloc Quebecois members, including myself, met with officials from the company and the union, here in Ottawa. We heard both sides. Following these

meetings, I personally feel that these massive layoffs are totally unjustified, particularly since Bell is among the telephone companies employing the smallest number of people per line in North America. Bell has always made substantial profits. I salute the courage and the determination of the employees of that company and also of their union, which seeks to protect the rights and benefits of its members against a management strategy designed to produce massive layoffs.

I would also like to salute the 2,000 delegates who are attending the Ontario Federation of Labour convention which has been going on in Toronto since Monday night. Yesterday, they marched down Bay Street, where Canadian banks and large corporations have their headquarters, to protest against Mike Harris' right wing policies, especially against the first piece of legislation his government enacted, which repealed the anti-scab act and makes the creation and certification of trade unions more difficult.

I would like to quote a statement made by an American, the Reverend Jesse Jackson, who told the convention delegates: "Do not allow the right to destroy all the accomplishments of many past generations". I could not agree more.

The Harris government has decided to dismantle the Ontario Labour Code. Moreover, it wants to reduce the size of the labour ministry by 46 per cent, which will mean fewer occupational health and safety inspectors, fewer air quality technicians, fewer officials to enforce minimum work standards, etc.

I am concerned about all these cuts and these attacks against workers in Ontario, the richest province in Canada.

The federal government, and the provincial governments of Ontario and Alberta, which are going after the poorest members of society in an attempt to put their financial house in order, are on the wrong track. They will only increase poverty. I believe that the way to go, instead, is job creation initiatives, tax fairness, a better redistribution of wealth, and increased social security.

Both at the provincial and federal levels, anti-scab legislation is not only essential, but urgently needed. I was very disappointed by the vote taken the day before yesterday by the members of this House who rejected by 144 against and 104 for the bill presented by my Bloc colleague, the member for Manicouagan. However, I salute the courage of a great number of Liberal members who supported the bill and who were in agreement with it, under the previous Conservative government. On the other hand, I denounce all the ministers, especially the labour minister, who voted against it.

**(1325)**

Following the example of Quebec and British Columbia, such an act at the federal level would avoid the worsening of labour conflicts, as was the case at the Ogilvie flour mill, in Montreal, where the strike lasted for 15 months.

Finally, I will say that I support the FTQ's request for the strengthening of the present succession rights of workers, should a Crown corporation be privatized or a private company under federal jurisdiction be disposed of. This problem has arisen mostly with the sale of Canadian airports.

To conclude, I stress that I will vote against Bill C-96.

**Mr. Gaston Leroux (Richmond-Wolfe, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, like my colleagues, I welcome the opportunity to speak about the Act to establish the Department of Human Resources Development.

Bill C-96 establishing the Department of Human Resources Development flows from the June 1993 reform and is another demonstration of this government's desire to centralize. The Liberal Party of Canada, faithful to the objectives established by its guru of the last decades, Pierre-Elliott Trudeau, took office at the House of commons in October 1993 with the clear intention of giving government in Canada a more centralized structure. Right from the beginning, there was a major offensive action against the autonomy Quebec was aiming at. During the two years of the present administration, we have seen countless examples of this thrust towards centralization.

Bill C-96 is but another step in the invasion, by the central government, of Quebec's jurisdictions in the area of social and economic development. Clauses 6 and 20 of that bill reveal the federal government will to limit the freedom of action of the Quebec National Assembly.

Clause 6 defines the powers, duties and functions of the minister which now extend, and I quote: "to include all matters over which Parliament has jurisdiction relating to the development of human resources of Canada with the objective of enhancing employment." The clause is unequivocal; it allows for the creation of a vast federal Human Resources Development department where the minister will have considerable powers and will be free to act without the approval of the provinces. In fact, this bill contains no provision on provincial jurisdiction, let alone on honouring this jurisdiction; on the contrary, it denies Quebec's exclusive jurisdiction over manpower training and development.

Clause 20 lists the organizations with which the minister may enter into agreements. It reads as follows: "For the purpose of facilitating the formulation, co-ordination and implementation of any program or policy [-]the minister may enter into agreements with a province or group of provinces, agencies of provinces, financial institutions and such other persons or bodies as the minister considers appropriate". So the minister may put anyone he wants in charge of managing his department's policies and programs without having to justify himself in the House or worrying about the Quebec government's directives.

In other words, he would have full discretion to contract out. The minister would have the power to enter into agreements with regional and local organizations, including municipalities, thus bypassing the provinces. This bill will

allow the federal government to disregard Quebec's exclusive jurisdiction over the design of manpower training and development programs.

Quebec has always denounced the federal government's intention to put in place its own parallel manpower programs in Quebec. Quebec's Minister of Employment, Mrs. Harel, says that this bill is the antithesis of the Quebec consensus on the manpower policy, the antithesis of the single window.

**(1330)**

Bill C-76, an act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on February 27, 1995, is another example of the Liberal federal government's relentless denial of Quebec. Under this bill, the Minister of Human Resources Development can use the money saved through UI reform to set up a human resources investment fund.

This fund will be spent on manpower training programs, among other things, thus allowing for massive federal intervention on a discretionary basis and with a centralizing effect in education, an area over which Quebec has exclusive jurisdiction, with total disregard for Quebec's policies in this sector.

Interprovincial trade is another area in which the federal government likes to impose its centralizing vision.

In Bill C-88 regulating interprovincial activities, the federal government assumes powers that were never discussed when this agreement was negotiated and signed in June 1994. Clause 9 of the bill stipulates that if a party is found to be in violation of Article 1710 of the agreement, the federal government, whether or not it is a party to the dispute, takes it upon itself to impose retaliatory measures against any province without distinction.

This bill shows, once more, the federal government's determination to act as judge and jury in interprovincial trade and to give itself, through this bill, a power of enforcement under orders issued by itself to extend the application of any federal law to the provinces, as stated in clause 9(1)(c).

This unitary state attitude of a centralizing federal system is in contradiction with provincial identities and, as such, impedes the development of the people of Quebec. This attitude is also reflected in Bill C-46 establishing the Department of Industry, whose clause 8 states specifically that the Minister of Industry is responsible for "economic development in areas of Ontario and Quebec".

This legislation only goes to show that there is overlap with respect to regional economic development by confirming the federal industry minister's right to interfere in an area of jurisdiction over which Quebec has been demanding control for a long time.



Bill C-91 to continue the Federal Business Development Bank under the name Business Development Bank of Canada is the last example of the centralizing federal legislation that I will give you here.

Clauses 20 and 21 of this act are totally unacceptable to Quebec. Clause 20 suggests that the Business Development Bank of Canada may enter into agreements with, and I quote: "and act as agent for, any department or agency of the government of Canada or a province, or any other body or person, for the provision of services or programs to" them or on their behalf.

This act also flies in the face of the economic development policies being implemented within Quebec. Under this clause, the Liberal federal government pursues its strategy of centralization, a political strategy to substantially restrict the Quebec government's ability to act in the area of economic development, ultimately preventing it from achieving political autonomy.

By usurping the power to act as an agent for any department or agency of Quebec, through the bank, the federal government completely ignores the authority of the Quebec National Assembly and its legislation on the executive council, which states that no department or agency of the Government of Quebec may deal with the federal government without prior consent. The new Federal Business Development Bank, the Business Development Bank of Canada, has become the instrument of federal interference in regional economic development in Quebec.

(1335)

The totally demagogic approach developed by Pierre Elliott Trudeau, who claimed that Canada is the most decentralized country in the world, is an insult to intelligence and reflects the bad faith now being displayed by the current Prime Minister. Such an attitude is a major impediment to finding a solution regarding Quebec's place in North America. In spite of the incessant pleas of the Quebec government to develop its own economic and social policies, the Liberal Party of Canada always said no and used every available legislative means to restrict the decision making power of Quebec's national assembly.

In the late sixties, Trudeau became Prime Minister and imposed a national vision which resulted in a series of federal interventions in fields of exclusive provincial jurisdiction. Since then, the primary objective of the federal government has been to streamline government activity and strengthen federal authority over the political economy. For example, in the area of manpower development and training, the federal government has over the last fifty years assumed increasing responsibility regarding the definition of the framework and conditions relating to government intervention in that area of Quebec economic activity. As a "policy definer", the federal government has given itself the role of direction setter and harmonizer, as opposed to that of a service provider for the provinces.

The patriation and review of the Constitution were opportunities for the federation to affirm the authority of

the central government over the economic and social management of all the provinces. Regardless of what Pierre Elliot Trudeau and the current Prime Minister may say, the 1982 Constitution Act confirms Ottawa's dominating role as the place where power is exercised. This is why 2,308,266 Quebecers voted for sovereignty on October 30.

[English]

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

**Some hon. members:** Question.

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

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

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

**Some hon. members:** Yea.

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

**Some hon. members:** Nay.

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

*And more than five members having risen:*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger):** Pursuant to Standing Order 45, the division on the question now before the House stands deferred until Monday, November 27 at the ordinary hour of daily adjournment, at which time the bells to call in the members will be sounded for not more than 15 minutes.

**Mr. Boudria:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I wish to seek the unanimous consent of the House to further defer the vote until Tuesday at the ordinary hour of adjournment.

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

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

\* \* \*

(1340)

*[Translation]*

### AUDITOR GENERAL ACT

**Hon. Diane Marleau (for the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Environment)** moved that Bill C-83, an Act to amend the Auditor General Act, be read the third time and passed.

**Mr. Clifford Lincoln (Parliamentary Secretary to Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Environment, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to take part in the debate on Bill C-83 at third reading and to support this legislation which will establish for the first time within the federal government the position of Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development.

Not so long ago, maybe 20 to 25 years ago, the environment was not among the major concerns of the government. In fact, most of the environment departments, at the federal and the provincial levels, were only set up during the 1970s. At that time, the environment was considered a self-contained issue. It was dealt with within one department, as were all the other areas, such as health, education, finance or revenue. Each department saw to its own business, without thinking about integrating elements from other departments.

Little by little, we realized over the last 25 years that everything that relates to one area, such as environment, taxation, transportation, health, is also interrelated with other areas. Nowadays, we cannot talk about the environment without addressing the issues of health, economy, energy, taxation, public transportation. Everything is linked together.

In fact, all things are interdependent. The whole environmental issue hinges on ecosystems and biodiversity. We need something to support all forms of life, our natural resources and everything that is essential to the wealth of any country, of any community.

We realize today that the only way for us to protect the environment and to ensure that sustainable development is a constant concern in our lives is to integrate the environment with all other aspects of government. That is why it is becoming increasingly important to talk not only about the environment, but also about sustainable development, biodiversity and interdependence.

That is why, in an ideal world, we would not even need an environment department. In an ideal world, such a department would not be needed because every department, whether it be the Department of Health, Finance, Transport or Fisheries, would in itself be a sustainable development department, an environment department.

But we are far from this ideal world. We still need a Department of the Environment to act as a watchdog and to

ensure that environmental protection becomes an integral part of the agenda of all other departments.

*[English]*

This is the central objective of Bill C-83. The central objective is to ensure that each ministry of the government, whether it be finance, transportation, health, or any other ministry, will be convinced that the way to promote the environmental cause is to make each ministry's activities and actions sustainable in the long term.

(1345 )

The reason for the bill is to ensure sustainable development strategies within the aegis of each ministry of the federal government. We have now constituted Bill C-83 to install a commissioner of environment and sustainable development within the office of the auditor general to monitor and inspire sustainable development strategies to be installed in each ministry of government, subject to public scrutiny through the office of the commissioner; the commissioner being installed within the office of the auditor general with all the autonomy and independence the office implies and sanctions.

The idea will be for these sustainable development strategies to be public in scope and accountable to the people of Canada through Parliament. They will have to be filed in Parliament and will be monitored by the commissioner who will have to report on them.

Bill C-83 will require the sustainable development strategies to be upgraded on a systematic basis so that the commissioner will have a benchmark starting in two years on the progress of these sustainable development strategies, considering the evolution of society in all its forms.

The office of the commissioner for environment and sustainable development is a key development in the governance of federal institutions. Besides the very important task of monitoring the sustainable development strategies of the ministries, another extremely important element of the commissioner's duties will be to be accountable to the public at large so that the public will have access to the commissioner's office to inquire, to complain if necessary, about the activities of the various ministries with regard to their sustainable development strategies and their environmental consciences.

The second element of public participation, that of accountability to the public, is a feature of the act which is almost if not as important as the first because the two are intertwined. This will provoke a transparent act, a bill that opens the scope of government to the public to ensure the government not only preach the preservation and enhancement of natural resources and the ecosystems that sustain all activities, but put the theory, the concept and the principles into practice in the every day governing of the various ministries of government.

Bill C-83 in that sense is a great step forward for the government, a clear achievement for the Minister of the Environment, in having recognized the necessity for the office in the red book which was the flag ship of the Liberal Party of Canada during the last election and, more important, to have carried out this key commitment at an early stage in its evolution as a government.

(1350 )

I am very pleased to have been part of the standing committee that examined and reported on the concept and office of a commissioner of environment and sustainable development. We are the first industrialized country of our size to have implemented such an office. We followed the lead of a very small country, a leading country of the world in this sense, New Zealand, which seven years ago installed an office of commissioner of sustainable development.

During the course of our hearings we were fortunate to have had the benefit of the experience and the advice of the commissioner for New Zealand, whose trail blazing work today has been the source of inspiration for ourselves. It is our hope that now that Canada has gone forward with the red book commitment and installed a commissioner for environment and sustainable development, this will become a practice that hopefully will be followed by the other nations of the world.

All of us are in this together. The environment is the most global issue of them all. Today we are committed as a nation to many international treaties such as the conventions on climate change and on biodiversity.

We are committed to the commission on sustainable development. We are committed to so many international instruments concerning environment and sustainable development that as we act, as we move forward, we set a tone, a benchmark which I firmly hope in this case will be followed by others in Canada and beyond.

[Translation]

I think Bill C-83—Could we ask these gentlemen to let me conclude my remarks?

[English]

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger):** Many members are coming into the Chamber for question period but I ask for the co-operation of the entire House while the parliamentary secretary concludes his remarks.

[Translation]

**Mr. Lincoln:** Mr. Speaker, I hope that all of the political parties represented in the House of Commons will consider this bill a positive, constructive and trail-blazing piece of legislation.

We may not have gone as far as the committee wanted to go at first, but I do think that our final resolution, the conclusion we have come to, is realistic and constructive, and is a huge step forward, not only for the federal government, but for all of Canada. This bill will show that the government is now firmly committed to sustainable development, not only through its environment department, but through all of its departments, all of the machinery of government. It will be up to us, as members of Parliament, and up to the people to ensure that the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development not only follows up on the sustainable development strategies, but also voices our concerns and puts pressure on all the governments, the current one, the next one and all the others after that. All this will mean that, for the government and the population, sustainable development will become one of our concerns and part of our daily lives.

I think Bill C-83 is a big step in the right direction for all of us. I am pleased to see today that it has come so far and that it will become a reality very soon, and I hope it will be passed by the Senate very fast so that it can come into effect as soon as possible.

[English]

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger):** I will take a moment to clarify a matter we dealt with earlier with reference to Bill C-96, following an intervention of the chief government whip, on vote deferrals.

It is my understanding the recorded division on second reading of Bill C-96 is deferred not to the ordinary hour of daily adjournment but to the end of government business on Tuesday, November 28.

**The Speaker:** It being 2 p.m. we will now proceed to Statements by Members.

## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[English]

### SENIORS' SAFETY WEEK

**Ms. Hedy Fry (Vancouver Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this week is Seniors' Safety Week. While growing old is as inevitable as taxes we know that seniors should remain active and stay in their own homes for as long as possible. It is integral to their good health.

Ironically the home is one of the least safe places for seniors. In Canada accidental death or injury leading to hospitalization that is often permanent is three times higher for seniors than for any other age group. These injuries exact high psychological and social costs on seniors. They lead to loss of independence and mobility, and fear and anxiety lead to isolation.

Therefore making home and consumer products safe is the best health promotion for seniors. Health Canada promotes increased safety awareness among seniors and their care givers. Access to devices and home improvements that ensure safe living environments for seniors are a priority for the government, which is why we support the Canada Safety Council's national safety week campaign.

I urge all members of the House to work toward safer communities for seniors. We will all be living in them eventually.

\* \* \*

## GUN CONTROL

**Mr. Jim Gouk (Kootenay West-Revelstoke, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, the Senate has now passed the infamous firearms legislation. For some it may be considered a victory but it is a very hollow victory at best.

The government has made some vague promises of safer streets and safer homes by introducing mandatory registration of rifles and shotguns. The Minister of Justice has never explained how cracking down on law-abiding citizens is going to prevent the criminal misuse of firearms. Obviously, criminals are not going to register anything they own.

I believe the legislation is nothing more than a very thin smoke screen to offer a false sense of safety to Canadians who are concerned about the growing crime problem in this country and to take pressure off a government that seems unwilling to do anything meaningful about it.

There is a tremendous cost involved in the legislation. The set-up cost is \$118.9 million by the minister's own figures, and registration itself will cost hundreds of millions more.

At a time when we are seeing federal cutbacks in transfer payments for health care, post-secondary education and various social programs, should the government not be reconsidering its priorities and refocusing the spending of what money it has in areas more meaningful than the registration of firearms belonging to law-abiding taxpayers in this country?

\* \* \*

## TOBACCO

**Mr. Peter Adams (Peterborough, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, studies in the U.S. show that smoking causes 415,000 deaths in a year and \$50 billion in medical care costs.

Smoking is the most important preventable cause of premature death. The immediate causes of death are a wide variety of cancers and cardiovascular and respiratory diseases. Yet 48 million young Americans still smoke. Twenty-four billion packs of cigarettes are purchased each

year. Every pack sold causes \$4 of expenditures on smoking related health care.

As 70 per cent of smokers begin before the age of 18 years, discouraging smoking among the young is essential if we are to cope with this problem. It has been shown that the young prefer the most heavily advertised brands. Here in Canada we must discourage our children from smoking.

These facts are from the 1994 issues of the morbidity and mortality weekly report of the Massachusetts Medical Society, 1440 Main Street, Waltham, Massachusetts, 02154. I would be glad to provide extracts to anyone interested.

\* \* \*

## MOTHERS AGAINST DRINKING AND DRIVING

**Mr. John Murphy (Annapolis Valley-Hants, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, on Thursday, November 16, I attended the local kick-off for the Mothers Against Drinking and Driving red ribbon campaign in the town of Kentville in my riding of Annapolis Valley-Hants. The red ribbon project is this organization's most visible grassroots campaign. Each red ribbon serves as a reminder for motorists to be safe and sober drivers during the holiday season and throughout the year.

In 1994 over 1,700 people were killed in alcohol related accidents. That works out to 4.6 people per day. By working to raise awareness on this issue, we can all help to prevent the senseless deaths and injuries that result from drinking and driving.

I have a red ribbon tied to the antenna of my car. I would ask that all members of the House support this very worthwhile campaign by doing the same.

\* \* \*

## CANADA OCEANS ACT

**Mrs. Jean Payne (St. John's West, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, on June 14 the government tabled Bill C-98, the Canada Oceans Act. This legislation is structured to provide a legal framework for the implementation of a new ocean management strategy. The Canada Oceans Act is needed to enable nation-wide management of our oceans on an ecosystem basis while ensuring that economic opportunities are achieved.

The province of Newfoundland is unique in its location and its dependency on intelligent oceans resource management. For this reason, the Canada Oceans Act is a landmark piece of legislation and is directed at the promotion of sustainable development and the protection of ocean resources.

With the Canada Oceans Act came the merger of the Canadian Coast Guard and the Department of Fisheries and Oceans. One key role for this integrated fleet will be fisheries conservation inside the 200-mile limit. Groundfish and other species will be protected while nature rebuilds these resources and shellfish will be protected from over-exploitation.

The Canada Oceans Act signals a renewal of Canada's-

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for Macleod.

\* \* \*

## MEDICARE

**Mr. Grant Hill (Macleod, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, medicare is important to all Canadians.

Medicare deserves a federal health minister who can adapt to major inevitable changes, like new technology, which will be expensive; like a population that is aging, which will also be expensive; and like government debt, with a federal Department of Health spending \$1,200 per person per year on debt service and just \$268 per person per year on health.

(1405 )

We need a keen, adaptable minister with fresh ideas. What do we have? We have a minister out of her depth, who is fining the provinces for the delivery of health care that does not match her interpretation of the Canada Health Act.

Medicare deserves better. Canadians deserve better. Federal fines for medicare mean failure.

## TRANSFER PAYMENTS

**Mr. John Solomon (Regina-Lumsden, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, last month the Liberal government reduced federal transfer payments to Saskatchewan by a further \$244 million. With a stroke of a pen, Saskatchewan's budget surplus has been wiped out.

Saskatchewan was the first province in Canada to produce a balanced budget without hurting those in need. This latest Liberal action will hurt those in need most.

Provinces have been under constant attack from the Liberal government's cutting of transfer payments. The Liberals' slashing of post-secondary education funding means higher education will only be available to wealthy families.

The reduction in transfer payments to the provinces is damaging to Canada's inter-generational and inter-regional sharing. Forcing young Canadians to pay more for their post-secondary education could cause them to lose sympathy for their elders. We ought not be surprised if soon these young people in turn demand that other

generations, such as seniors, finance their own social and economic needs on a pay as you go basis as well.

Is this the Liberal vision for Canada, pitting one generation against the other?

\* \* \*

## WINTER CITIES CONFERENCE

**Mr. Ronald J. Duhamel (Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Treasury Board, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the hosting in Winnipeg next February of the Seventh International Winter Cities Conference and Showcase.

[*Translation*]

This conference will bring together mayors and business leaders from more than sixty different cities and twenty-six countries, to share their knowledge and ideas about what it is to live in a winter city.

[*English*]

By hosting Winter Cities '96, those of us who live and work in Winnipeg will be able to demonstrate to the rest of Canada and indeed to the rest of the world that we are immensely proud of our city and delighted to share it.

Winter Cities '96 is also a tremendous chance for Canadian businesses to showcase and promote their talents. At the moment, over 200 volunteers are hard at work preparing to welcome visitors from over 60 cities and 26 different countries.

[*Translation*]

I would like to thank them for their hard work.

[*English*]

I am sure that Winnipeg will make this Winter Cities Conference the most successful yet.

\* \* \*

[*Translation*]

## CP RAIL

**Mr. Roger Pomerleau (Anjou-Rivière-des-Prairies, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Prime Minister made a shameful remark, taking dangerous liberties with reality.

By linking the departure of CP Rail from Montreal with the sovereignist movement, and even having the colossal nerve

to state that the sovereignists are intolerant of cultural minorities in Quebec, the Prime Minister sidestepped the question and added fuel to the fire.

If the Prime Minister listened to CBC a little more often, he would have known that Mr. Ritchie, the President of CP Rail, has denied any connection between moving the headquarters and Quebec's move toward sovereignty. Mr. Ritchie simply pointed out that 80 per cent of CP activities were in the west. And this is the result of federal policies.

Rather than seeking to exacerbate the differences between the various groups making up Quebec society, the Prime Minister ought to be working to bring them closer together. This is another of the real problems the Prime Minister ought to be addressing.

\* \* \*

[English]

## HEMOPHILIA

**Ms. Jean Augustine (Etobicoke-Lakeshore, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, November has been declared hemophilia month. Approximately 2,400 Canadians are affected by hemophilia, an inherited condition characterized by a failure in blood-clotting mechanisms in the body.

The Canadian Hemophilia Society is dedicated to providing information and support services to persons with hemophilia and other related blood conditions.

The Canadian Hemophilia Society has recently received a grant for \$125,000 from Health Canada to assist in the development of a stronger volunteer base. This is in addition to the over \$450,000 that has been contributed through the national AIDS strategy for AIDS information and prevention activities.

Today let us join together to salute the outstanding work of the Canadian Hemophilia Society. We wish them a successful campaign during hemophilia month.

## CANADIAN POLISH CONGRESS

**Mr. Jesse Flis (Parkdale-High Park, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Canadian Polish Congress is an umbrella organization that unites over 240 organizations representing Canadians of Polish origin.

The congress is active in many areas, from helping to successfully resettle newcomers to the promotion of excellent relations with ethnocultural groups across Canada.

Throughout its history, the congress has participated in the development of a strong and united Canada, often

providing input and advice to federal and provincial governments through briefs and through personal input.

I am therefore pleased to announce that the Canadian Polish Congress Council has chosen Ottawa as the site of the 1995 annual meeting this week. I welcome the delegates from all provinces and regions, who are beginning the council meeting with a visit to the House of Commons.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

## UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

**Mrs. Francine Lalonde (Mercier, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, according to the *Globe and Mail*, the government is preparing to reduce maximum insurable earnings for unemployment insurance.

This decrease will constitute the most important tax cut by this government, but essentially the ones to benefit will be high income earners who will therefore be paying less into the unemployment insurance fund, while people with unstable and seasonal work will get less money in benefits.

The minister himself has stated in the past that raising the ceiling would improve income distribution. He knows what he is doing.

We are anxious to see this long awaited unemployment insurance reform. This government, which claims it is addressing people's real problems, did not dare to table it before the referendum. Now we are really going to get clobbered.

\* \* \*

[English]

## ATLANTIC CANADA

**Mr. Leon E. Benoit (Vegreville, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, methinks the Liberals doth protest too much.

To the members of the traditional good old boys club in Atlantic Canada, let us talk oppression. It is the Liberal fisheries minister who would charge an ice-free port for icebreaking. It is the Liberal human resources minister who airlifted Atlantic Canadians to Ontario. It is Liberal provincial politicians who have monitored attendance at public meetings. These are the politicians who perpetuate the oppressive political system of handouts and rampant patronage. The truth hurts.

Reformers openly challenge the political system in Atlantic Canada. We offer hope and self-reliance to Atlantic Canadians through proposals such as Atlantica, which

builds trade alliances with the eastern United States. This will create jobs.

**The Speaker:** The hon. member had me worried there; I thought he was going to start reciting the Barbe.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

## LEADER OF THE BLOC QUEBECOIS

**Mr. Nick Discepola (Vaudreuil, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the leader of the Bloc Quebecois surprised few people on Tuesday with his announcement of his candidacy for the position vacated by Jacques Parizeau.

He surprised no one either with his announcement that his first priority would be Quebec's public finances. Truth be known, the disastrous state of Quebec's public finances is forcing all pretenders to the throne to promise to make them their first priority.

He did, however, surprise and disappoint people with his announcement that he would never sign a new constitutional agreement. The potential successor to Jacques Parizeau must respect the people's decision of October 30 and work, as the people of Quebec have requested, to renew Canadian federalism. If his separatist obsession precludes his doing so, let him give up the throne to someone who give more heed to the will of the people.

\* \* \*

## GUN CONTROL

**Mrs. Pierrette Venne (Saint-Hubert, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, last evening, the other House finally voted in favour of gun control.

The work we started six years ago has finally come to a conclusion. We now have a tool to help improve public safety. The struggle mobilized many people who, like me, firmly believed that tighter control was necessary. I would like to thank them for their dedication and their tenacity.

On the eve of the grievous anniversary of the massacre at the École polytechnique, Parliament has heard the concerns of the victims' families. Responsible gun owners like us know that privileges imply obligations, and so the law will be observed. We must, however, remain vigilant and continue to keep close watch on the law and its regulations.

[English]

## CANADIAN SUGAR INDUSTRY

**Mrs. Elsie Wayne (Saint John, PC):** Mr. Speaker, the Canadian sugar industry is very happy with the recent trade ruling by the Canadian International Trade Tribunal, which confirmed that dumped sugar from the U.S. and subsidized sugar from the European Union is threatening material injury to the industry.

(1415 )

The industry is also pleased that the United States has decided to exempt sugar from the Helms bill, which would have placed serious implications on Canada's ability to export sugar.

All this being said, the Canadian sugar industry still has one very key irritant that needs to be resolved. Canadian sugar exports to the U.S. were drastically reduced last year when the Americans implemented new trade restrictions which lowered our export quota. As a result, the Lantic Sugar refinery in Saint John, New Brunswick, had to lay off many employees. These tariffs are estimated to cost many hundreds of Canadian jobs in the sugar industry.

As an Atlantic Canadian, I call on the minister of trade to finish the job and continue to enter into formal negotiations with the U.S.

## ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[Translation]

## THE CONSTITUTION

**Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday when the Prime Minister backed out of the promises he made to Quebecers six days before the referendum and said that reopening the Constitution was out of the question, Quebecers all remembered the promises made by Pierre Elliott Trudeau on May 14, 1980, promises on which the government at the time immediately proceeded to renege.

Since six days before the referendum the Prime Minister clearly referred to the Constitution as a way to bring about change, does yesterday's retreat signify that Quebecers were tricked once again as they were in 1980, when they were promised so-called satisfactory constitutional changes and the government did not deliver?

**Hon. Sheila Copps (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Environment, Lib.):** On the contrary, Mr. Speaker. The Prime Minister's statement in Verdun on October 24 was as follows, and I quote; "We will keep open all the other roads to change, including administrative and constitutional means. Any changes in constitutional jurisdiction will only be made with the consent of

Quebecers”, while the Leader of the Opposition said, and I quote: “While he talks about the Constitution, we will look after jobs”.

[English]

When asked whether he would sign any deal he said: “No, it is not possible. I am a sovereigntist”. The person who is off the wall on this is not the Prime Minister; it is the Leader of the Opposition.

[Translation]

**Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, this is a fine way of passing the buck. This government blames unemployment on the previous government, and when there are problems with the Constitution, it blames them on the opposition.

When the Prime Minister made these promises to Quebec a few days before the referendum, he knew there was a sovereigntist government in Quebec City. He knew that perfectly well. He made certain promises. So how can he use the sovereigntist government in Quebec City as an excuse to back out of the promises he made so he will not have to deliver the goods?

**Hon. Sheila Copps (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Environment, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I will repeat the promises made by the Prime Minister, which will be kept, and I quote: “We will keep open all the other roads to change, including administrative and constitutional means. Any changes in constitutional jurisdiction will only be made with the consent of Quebecers”.

If anyone is saying no, it is not the Prime Minister but the Leader of the Opposition, who the day after the referendum dismissed the option of constitutional change.

**Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval, BQ):** How delightful, Mr. Speaker. What is the world coming to? Now for my question, and I hope we manage to understand each other.

The Prime Minister of Canada-not Joe Blow but the Prime Minister-comes to Quebec six days before a referendum. Without anyone asking, he promises the changes the Deputy Prime Minister just mentioned.

(1420)

And then we have the same Prime Minister, and since I am going to quote him, I will quote exactly what he said two days after the referendum in this House: “This I have promised and this I will do”. And yesterday, he told us: “I will not do it”. What is going on?

**Hon. Sheila Copps (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Environment, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, on the contrary. The Prime Minister promised, and I quote: “Any changes in constitutional jurisdiction will only be made with the consent of Quebecers”.

Meanwhile, the Leader of the Opposition and future leader of the Parti Quebecois said in English, referring to the Constitution, that he did not believe it would be possible to formulate any offers, that they were not interested. That is what the Leader of the Opposition said, and we do not want to impose constitutional changes if he says Quebec does not want them.

[English]

**The Speaker:** I remind all members not to use props of any kind.

[Translation]

**Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier-Sainte-Marie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, two days ago, the Prime Minister made a suggestion to extend the deadline of the phoney committee chaired by the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, whose mandate, according to its chairman, is to save Canada by reviewing all the options to renew federalism.

Can the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs tell us if he still intends to table the report of the phoney committee before Christmas or if he will grab the line thrown by the Prime Minister to gain a little more time?

**Hon. Marcel Massé (President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister responsible for Public Service Renewal, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I should first set the record straight. As I said before, the perfect example of a phoney committee is the Parti Quebecois's regional commissions, in which the Bloc Quebecois took part.

I would like to remind them that there are five million voters in Quebec, not 50,000, and that their commissions were not representative and did not try to find conclusions that would help Quebec and Canada, while our committee is looking at all the options and seeking solutions to our problems.

Once again, we are holding out our hand in good faith to the Bloc Quebecois and the Parti Quebecois and urging them to soften their stance and negotiate a renewed federalism, as 80 per cent of Quebecers are asking them to do.

**Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier-Sainte-Marie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I must admit that the minister has a vivid imagination. He said that his committee's mandate was to review all the options in order to honour the Prime Minister's referendum promises, because the Prime Minister did make promises. But the Prime Minister is now turning his back on constitutional change. This is a remake of 1980, an old movie that we have seen before, but we have since gained 10 per cent. Soon we will gain even more in less time.

In this context, can the minister tell us what the phoney committee still has as a mandate? Should he not dismantle



it instead, since the Prime Minister has decided as usual not to offer Quebec anything?

**Hon. Marcel Massé (President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister responsible for Public Service Renewal, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, once again, the hon. member's statements are wrong. As the Deputy Prime Minister said, the Prime Minister clearly stated in Verdun that we would keep open all other avenues of change, including administrative and constitutional changes.

Yesterday in the House, the Prime Minister said this:

I never said we were going to change the Constitution—I said we were going to make changes to the federation, constitutional changes, if necessary—  
There is no contradiction between the two sentences. It is the official opposition that will not abide by the results of the referendum, which showed very clearly that Quebecers want change, but within Canada.

\* \* \*

[English]

## THE CONSTITUTION

**Mr. Stephen Harper (Calgary West, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, we are being reminded again today by the Bloc Québécois that in the referendum campaign the federal Liberals made a couple of constitutional offers to Quebec. Despite the referendum loss the Government of Quebec and its future premier have already made it clear that they reject these offers and further that they would reject any offers of renewed federalism.

(1425)

Will the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs make it clear today for all Canadians that the Government of Canada will not make further constitutional offers to a PQ government that has no intention of accepting them and that Canadians are sick and tired of playing this game with the separatists?

**Hon. Marcel Massé (President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister responsible for Public Service Renewal, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, unfortunately it is true that the Leader of the Opposition, thinking about his future role as premier of Quebec, indicated that he would not consider any offers to renew federalism.

However, in saying that the leader was refusing to recognize the result of the referendum where the majority of Quebecers told him that they wanted changes to be made within Canada. He was also refusing to respect the majority of Quebecers who have expressed their views.

We will not do the same thing to Quebecers. We will be in a position to offer ways in which the present problems can be solved.

**Mr. Stephen Harper (Calgary West, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, the minister avoided answering my question on constitutional offers, but in any case I will proceed with my supplementary question for the same minister.

As he pointed out, the Government of Quebec has made it clear that it will seek another referendum on sovereignty in spite of the fact that in the last referendum it never did make a detailed proposal on sovereignty and the proposed economic partnership.

Before the next referendum will the federal government formally request that the Government of Quebec table its detailed proposals for sovereignty and future economic relations with the rest of Canada so that Quebecers and other Canadians can evaluate the credibility of the ideas?

**Hon. Marcel Massé (President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister responsible for Public Service Renewal, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we will respect the current referendum which indicated that Quebecers want changes to be made and that they want the changes to be made within Canada.

I will repeat what the Prime Minister said yesterday in the House.

[Translation]

"I never said we were going to change the Constitution. I said we were going to make changes to the federation, constitutional changes, if necessary".

That is what we are working on. We will make recommendations to the Prime Minister, and we hope to be able to find solutions that will ensure, once again, that Canada remains as we know it, a united country, a country where we can all make our dreams and aspirations come true, whether we live in Quebec or in another province.

[English]

**Mr. Stephen Harper (Calgary West, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, these are good words but they continue to miss the point, which is that the Government of Quebec is not interested in such plans and will proceed with another referendum at some point.

Let me go back to the Government of Canada's own commitments. On October 25, 1995 in a speech to the entire nation the Prime Minister said:

All governments, federal and provincial, must respond to the desire of Canadians everywhere for greater decentralization.

This was a commitment to all Canadians that the Government of Quebec simply could not reject on behalf of everybody.

As the government has done nothing but bash decentralization since the referendum, what specifically do the Prime Minister and the government have in mind in making this kind of a commitment?

**Hon. Marcel Massé (President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister responsible for Public Service Renewal, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, on this very important question I can only repeat what our line has been. It has been that decentralization would happen only when it is shown very clearly that it is more efficient to transfer responsibilities from one level of government to another.

It will be decentralization if it well serves Canadian citizens who pay taxes, but there is no doubt that decentralization for its own sake is not a remedy to any of the problems we now have.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

## PUBLIC SERVICE

**Mr. René Laurin (Joliette, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance.

In his budget speech, the Minister of Finance announced that compensation packages for laid-off public servants would cost approximately \$1.3 billion. But the annual financial statement tabled by the government shows a huge cost overrun, with costs up to \$2.3 billion.

(1430)

How can the government explain the fact that its public service downsizing programs have cost \$1 billion more than anticipated?

**Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance and Minister responsible for the Federal Office of Regional Development-Quebec, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, if the President of the Treasury Board were here, I am sure that, in response to the member's question, he would say that this increase can be attributed, first, to the pension funds that were not factored in when preparing the budget since they were not included in budget projections and, second, to the fact that more employees have accepted the offer earlier than expected. These costs will be recovered in time.

**Mr. René Laurin (Joliette, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, it is surprising to say the least that the President of the Treasury Board never mentioned anything about this to the Minister of Finance. In view of the finance minister's answer, I might add that one of these public service downsizing programs, the early retirement program, which was

supposed to affect 4,000 employees and cost \$300 million, attracted 1,500 more people than expected and ended up costing \$800 million instead of the original \$300 million, or almost three times more than expected.

How can the government explain that its early retirement program will end up costing almost three times more than expected?

**Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance and Minister responsible for the Federal Office of Regional Development-Quebec, Lib.):** First of all, Mr. Speaker, as I just said, this is explained, in the one hand, by the fact that some employees have agreed to retire sooner than anticipated and, on the other hand, by the fact that there are more people in certain areas than in others, but that is not a problem for the government because this will save us money down the road.

\* \* \*

[English]

## GUN CONTROL

**Mr. Jack Ramsay (Crowfoot, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, the governments of the provinces, particularly Manitoba, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Ontario as well as the two territories all registered opposition to the registration component of Bill C-68.

How does the government plan to gain the co-operation of these governments after having forced the bill upon them against their will?

**Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am glad the hon. member has noted that Parliament has now adopted a bill designed to ensure that we have peaceful communities-

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear.

**Mr. Gray:** -and designed to ensure we have increasingly safe homes and safe streets in this country.

I am sure the provincial governments will take note of the strong support for this measure across the country which will inspire their co-operation.

In any event, the Minister of Justice has announced today the appointment of a user group on firearms, composed of people from across the country who are responsible firearms users. This will be a very important way to make sure we have a cost effective, user friendly system of firearms registration which takes into account the concerns of responsible firearms users.

**Mr. Jack Ramsay (Crowfoot, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member would have us believe that the provincial

governments do not have any consideration for the safety of their communities and their streets and that only the federal government can see that kind of safety within the bill.

The federal-provincial financial agreements for the administration of gun control programs expired on March 31, 1993. I ask the government, what is the status of these financial negotiations with the provinces? Have these agreements been renewed and if not, why not?

**Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I will have to get further information on this for my hon. friend. It is the desire of the government to have agreements with the provinces which respect their concerns and at the same time ensure the safety of Canadians.

I hope my hon. friend will finally realize the support of Canadians for this bill and cease his opposition, which is certainly not well founded in light of the facts and in light of the support of Canadians who want safe homes and safe streets. They do not want an American style gun culture anywhere in Canada.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

## CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION

**Mrs. Suzanne Tremblay (Rimouski-Témiscouata, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Canadian Heritage. Mr. Manera, the former CBC President, and Mr. Beatty, the current one, both said that, should the CBC undergo additional cuts, it would be necessary to review the mandate of that corporation.

(1435)

Does the minister intend to order new cuts to the CBC and, if so, will he review its mandate, as is deemed necessary by Mr. Manera and Mr. Beatty?

**Hon. Michel Dupuy (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member has got it all wrong. You do not deal first with the budget and then with the mandate. You start with the mandate and then look at the budget. This is exactly what we are doing.

A committee will make recommendations to us regarding CBC's mandate. We will look at these recommendations, make decisions and then decide on a long term financial plan.

**Mrs. Suzanne Tremblay (Rimouski-Témiscouata, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, given that the French network is already performing a lot better than the English one, does the

minister realize that any additional cut would have a greater impact on the French network and could jeopardize its mandate?

**Hon. Michel Dupuy (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, there is one aspect regarding CBC's mandate which, I think, will not change. It is the fact that the CBC must respect the linguistic duality of our country. This is a public institution. It is an institution which will continue to reflect that basic reality of our country.

If the hon. member has opinions on the budget cuts made by CBC's president and board of directors and looks to me, it may be that she wants me to manage that corporation. That will not happen. I will merely be the one who decides on CBC's mandate and budget.

[English]

## AGRICULTURE

**Mr. Allan Kerpan (Moose Jaw-Lake Centre, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food.

Last March the minister announced that he had instructed the Farm Credit Corporation to turn over the Crow payout to producers who lease land from the FCC. Last month the FCC stated that the minister's benevolent government corporation would increase the producer's share from a very generous 10 per cent up to a whopping 25 per cent.

Why did the FCC defy the minister's instructions? Farmers want to know who is in charge: the minister or his good Liberal friend and party contributor, Mr. Don Jackson?

**Hon. Ralph E. Goodale (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I do not know what party affiliation Mr. Jackson has. I have never discussed it with him and I do not intend to.

On the substance of the issue, it is obviously not up to me to offer instructions to the FCC in terms of how it manages its business affairs. When the announcement was made in the budget with respect to the \$1.6 billion capital payment in the wake of the cancellation of the WGTA, the FCC itself took the initiative to announce that it would find a way to equitably share that benefit with its leasing clients. It offered one particular formula. A number of the clients indicated to the FCC that in the opinion of the clients, they did not think that formula was sufficiently generous. As a consequence, the FCC more than doubled the formula.

**Mr. Allan Kerpan (Moose Jaw-Lake Centre, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, the minister and the general manager for the FCC are saying one thing and doing another. The minister has stated that the balance of the payment would be reflected in lower lease and sale agreements, yet documented cases in Saskatchewan show that FCC leases and asking prices have risen by as much as 20 per cent.

Will the minister finally take a stand on something and address this paradox before it is too late?

**Hon. Ralph E. Goodale (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman is obviously being a bit inconsistent. He invites me to take a stand and every time I do that he criticizes it because it is not the Reform Party position. I would remind him that I was elected as a Liberal, not as a Reformer, and I do not intend to adopt his party's position.

(1440)

With respect to the arrangements made by the FCC, it anticipates that in the first year of the adjustment to the loss of the Crow rate it will pass through to its tenant clients 12.5 per cent of the value of the Crow payment that it will receive. In the second year it will pass through another 12.5 per cent. It is fully expected by the third year that the impact of the freight rate adjustment will have worked its way through the land pricing system in western Canada and the benefit of reduced land costs will then be adjusted into the capital base.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

### CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION

**Mrs. Christiane Gagnon (Quebec, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the heritage minister.

The heritage minister is attempting to justify the way its government is apportioning the cuts at the CBC by pretending that both the French and the English networks will have to make the same effort.

Can the minister explain why, in 1992-93, according to the most recent numbers available, the production costs for a one hour program were \$18,000 on the French network and \$37,000 on the English one?

**Hon. Michel Dupuy (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our colleague does not seem to take into account the fact that the CBC is an independent corporation. I have the responsibility to look after its mandate and its overall financing; the board of directors and the president run the show.

**Mrs. Christiane Gagnon (Quebec, BQ):** But then, Mr. Speaker, why has the minister attempted to justify the way the cuts are being apportioned at the CBC? Can the minister explain why a one hour sport program, for instance, costs, for the same time slot, \$28,000 on the French network and \$70,000 on the English network?

**Hon. Michel Dupuy (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my colleague would like me to be the

accountant and the auditor for the CBC, which I am not and will not be.

\* \* \*

[English]

### CONFEDERATION LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY

**Mr. Andy Mitchell (Parry Sound-Muskoka, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Secretary of State for Financial Institutions.

The pensions and other savings of many present and former Bell Canada employees and many other Canadians have been jeopardized by the collapse of Confederation Life. Could the minister tell us what can be done to help speed up the liquidation process so that these Canadians receive their moneys as quickly as possible?

**Hon. Douglas Peters (Secretary of State (International Financial Institutions), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, there are a number of interested constituents, and I would suggest to Reform Party members that some of their constituents might be interested as well in this matter.

The liquidation of Confederation Life is a court supervised process, in case some members did not know that. Responsibility for realizing the value of Confederation Life assets has been passed to a liquidator, Peat Marwick Thorne, under the supervision of the court.

Accordingly, people affected by the failure of Confederation Life should be in contact with the liquidator. The liquidator is responsible for obtaining maximum value for Confederation Life's assets. Again the liquidator does not wish to proceed with fire sale prices which would affect this.

There have been many positive developments since the liquidation began. Many lines of business have been sold and efforts are being made to sell the others.

\* \* \*

### CN RAIL

**Mr. Jim Gouk (Kootenay West-Revelstoke, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, the government has indicated some concern in the past about the marketability of the CN shares. It even went so far as to suggest it may sell part now and then the rest of them later on when things improve.

Can the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport please tell the House if he anticipates a total sale of the government's shares in CN Rail?

**Mr. Joe Fontana (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for his great interest in this matter and the question.

As the member will know, this has been the most successful government issue in terms of privatization in our history. In fact the stock issue has gone better than expected.

(1445 )

The member will know that as anticipated it has gone so well that it looks like government may not have to keep any position in CN whatsoever. It will divest itself 100 per cent.

**Mr. Jim Gouk (Kootenay West-Revelstoke, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, indeed there does seem to be great interest in the stock offering. Many potential Canadian purchasers have been unable to buy shares because of the large percentage offered outside of Canada.

Will the parliamentary secretary please explain to the House and to Canadians why the government rejected the Reform amendment to Bill C-89 which would have seen the share offering to Canadians and Canadian companies only for the first 60 days and would result in Canadian National Railway's remaining in Canadian hands, instead of intentionally selling 40 per cent to 50 per cent to foreign investors.

**Mr. Joe Fontana (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the fact that the government wanted to maximize the price for CN was the reason it wanted maximum exposure not only in Canada but in the United States and elsewhere.

We were able to achieve such a good price because of that very reason. Foreign holdings or foreign shares were capped at 40 per cent. That Canadians were able to purchase over 60 per cent of Canadian National bodes very well for the issue.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

## HIV

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

In 1989, a Quebec company, BioChem, developed a very important drug for the treatment of HIV infection, called 3TC. The American Food and Drug Administration has approved 3TC for sale in the United States. Because of the administrative slowness of Health Canada, the Americans are able to profit from this discovery before we do.

How can the minister explain that 3TC, a drug developed here, is already approved for use in the United States, while Health Canada is dragging its feet?

**Hon. Diane Marleau (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, scientists at Health Canada are continuing their work as fast as they can. We expect that they will give their approval very shortly.

**Mr. Réal Ménard (Hochelaga-Maisonneuve, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I can tell you that the minister will make this year's "Bye! Bye!". I will ask her a supplementary question.

The minister has nice sounding words, but does she realize what the inefficiency of Health Canada means for the persons infected, especially when they know that their American counterparts are able to make good use of that drug, a drug developed here?

[English]

**Hon. Diane Marleau (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member must also be aware that while drug approval is under way, there are ways for people in need of these medications to have access to them.

We have a number of programs, including emergency drug release programs. We are doing absolutely everything we can to fast track approval of some of these drugs. In the meantime we are also facilitating their access for people who truly need them.

## INFRASTRUCTURE

**Mr. John Williams (St. Albert, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, the President of the Treasury Board told the government operations committee that the government's much heralded infrastructure program cost Canadian taxpayers \$750,000 for every job created.

Last year the auditor general said the \$4.5 billion spent on job creation by regional development agencies has failed. The number of jobs created has been fudged, inflated and politically massaged.

Will the Minister of Finance acknowledge the taxpayers had a bum rap, that the unemployed have been led down the garden path, and that his own deficit reductions could have been much larger if he would only acknowledge that this process of job creation does not work?

**Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance and Minister responsible for the Federal Office of Regional Development-Quebec, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, one can speak to virtually every mayor of every municipality. One can speak to the executives of the mayors in municipalities. One can speak to the provinces. They will say the infrastructure program has been a tremendous success all across the country.

If one reads the auditor general's report, what he does is level a series of statements as to defects in evaluation, the vast majority of which occurred under the previous government and have been cleaned up by this government, which is why the auditor general congratulated the regional agencies under the Liberal government, and we are very proud of it.

(1450 )

**Mr. John Williams (St. Albert, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I could not find the congratulations. First we had the national unity cabinet committee and now we have the job creation cabinet committee being struck. This is talk, talk, talk and more money flushed down the drain for a top down, borrowed money, government directed job creation program that we know will fail.

Will the Minister of Finance recognize and acknowledge that if he wants a serious job creation program he has to get the government off the backs of the private sector, reduce the deficit faster than he has been doing and reduce taxes? Each of these things is opposite to what the government has been doing so far.

**Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance and Minister responsible for the Federal Office of Regional Development-Quebec, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, if one looks at the trend of interest rates since the last budget, one would see those interest rates have come down and will understand the very clear linkage between deficit reduction, lowering interest rates and job creation. That is more than likely one reason that over the course of the last year and half there have been over 500,000 new jobs created in Canada.

The President of the Treasury Board told me that the proof the infrastructure program has been such a great success is that the member for Simcoe Centre keeps writing to him for more money.

\* \* \*

## BOSNIA

**Mr. Sarkis Assadourian (Don Valley North, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

On November 21, with the historic signing of the peace accord in Dayton, Ohio between the warring parties in the Bosnian conflict, would the Minister of Foreign Affairs comment on any new role the Canadian government may play in support of the peace process in war torn Bosnia?

**Mr. Jesse Flis (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we are all pleased to welcome the Dayton peace agreement, bringing an end to the conflict in the former Yugoslavia.

I think I speak on behalf of everyone in the House when I say we congratulate all of the participants who had anything to do with helping bring about this peace accord.

The peace accord is one thing but a lasting peace, the post-peace accord period, is sometimes as important or more important than the peace settlement itself. There will now be a period of reconstruction, rehabilitation and reconciliation. We will be monitoring this post-accord period very closely to see what part Canada can play together with its allies.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

## EMPLOYMENT CENTRES

**Mr. Yves Rocheleau (Trois-Rivières, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister. Last July, the Minister of Human Resources Development announced a major restructuring of his employment centre network and decided that the regional management centre for the Mauricie would be located in Shawinigan, in the riding of Saint-Maurice, instead of Trois-Rivières, the regional capital.

Since then, 25,000 people have signed a petition condemning the government's decision and 40 municipal councils in that region have adopted resolutions to that effect.

In this context, what is the rationale for establishing this regional centre in Shawinigan instead of Trois-Rivières when the public wants exactly the opposite?

[English]

**Mr. Maurizio Bevilacqua (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Human Resources Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I take great pleasure in answering the hon. member's question.

What the government of Canada did in that instance was make a very important and valuable response to the issue of service delivery. We have basically amalgamated Revenue Canada and HRD services to provide one stop shopping for Quebecers.

[Translation]

**Mr. Yves Rocheleau (Trois-Rivières, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, you will understand that I would have liked to get an answer from someone who is familiar with this matter.

Will the Prime Minister dare deny the fact that it is a highly partisan, arbitrary and illogical decision that the office of the Minister for Human Resources Development got directly from the Prime Minister's office?

[English]

**Mr. Maurizio Bevilacqua (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Human Resources Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his questions. Anytime he would like to compare notes on this file, I will be willing to sit down with him.

The Government of Canada has increased points of service for Canadians from 450 to 750. Through the use of technology we have reduced the number of days required to file unemployment insurance claims from eight to two. Similarly, we have increased points of service for seniors by 400 per cent.

(1455)

If the hon. member would like a further briefing, I will be available in my office.

\* \* \*

## IRVING WHALE

**Mr. Paul Forseth (New Westminster-Burnaby, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of the Environment.

The *Irving Whale* salvage feasibility study submitted to the coast guard in 1992 noted the presence of a heating fluid called Mansanto MGS 295S. Had someone read the report carefully they would have discovered that the fluid was Monsanto MCS 295S, a substance comprised of 80 per cent PCBs.

When the minister asked the RCMP to investigate a possible cover-up of the knowledge of PCBs, did she ask it also to investigate her own department to find out who made the mistake? It was obvious that cover-up was on her mind.

**The Speaker:** In the formulation of a question we always give the widest latitude, but we should be very careful not to impute motive in any way, especially in this particular context. I ask the hon. member to withdraw the last words.

**Mr. Forseth:** Mr. Speaker, I withdraw the words. I was not imputing motive.

**The Speaker:** Thank you. The hon. Minister of the Environment.

**Hon. Sheila Copps (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Environment, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, on July 6 of this year I ordered an investigation into the circumstances as to whether and why the Canadian Environmental Protection Act was violated in that information regarding PCBs had not been forwarded to my department.

That preliminary investigation was concluded last week and the results were serious enough that I have turned the matter over to the Attorney General of Canada and to the RCMP for further investigation.

With the investigation in the hands of the RCMP it has the full latitude to investigate everybody, including me.

**Mr. Paul Forseth (New Westminster-Burnaby, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, the minister needs to accept ministerial responsibility for the actions of her own department.

On March 18, 1994 the minister tabled the 1992 report to which I referred. I would think if the minister tabled the material she is responsible for its contents. She has known since the tabling that PCBs were on board the *Irving Whale* barge.

It is amazing that the environment minister calls for a police investigation when the fault lies with her. Will the minister accept the responsibility for the report which she tabled and take the blame for the mishaps of her department, an open ended cost so far of \$12 million with still no results?

**Hon. Sheila Copps (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Environment, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I will accept my full responsibilities. Under the law of the people of Canada I was required in July to turn this matter over to an investigation because there was a possibility that evidence on the presence of PCBs had been withheld from the department specifically.

If the hon. member is suggesting I should break the law and ignore the requirement under CEPA to inform of the presence of PCBs by law, I will not. If he is suggesting I am attempting to deflect responsibility or am participating in a cover-up I will categorically deny that.

When I asked for the further investigation of the preliminary results by the attorney general and the RCMP, I made no bones about the openness of the RCMP to investigate everybody, including the actions of all departments of government.

## CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION

**Mr. Simon de Jong (Regina-Qu'Appelle, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, my question is addressed to the Minister of Canadian Heritage.

The CBC, one of the few remaining ties helping to keep our country together, is about to snap. The president of the CBC has warned that any further cuts would so drastically reduce the CBC that a change to its legislated mandate would be necessary. The minister, however, earlier today in the House guaranteed that the budget will fit the mandate, not the mandate the budget.

Does the government really want the CBC to continue to exist? If it does, will the government rescind the further \$123 million in cuts it has ordered and provide the CBC with multi-year funding as promised in the red book?

**Hon. Michel Dupuy (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we are on record as supporting a strong public broadcaster and supporting the CBC.

(1500 )

We will indeed be looking at the future financing requirements of the CBC once we have decided on the mandate.

\* \* \*

## HEALTH OF WOMEN

**Mrs. Jane Stewart (Brant, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in my riding of Brant we are very concerned about the high incidence of low birth weight babies, about the increasing impact of heart disease on women, about osteoporosis, about breast and uterine cancer.

What is the minister doing to resolve these concerns and make good our promises in the red book to attend to the health issues of women?

**Hon. Diane Marleau (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the health of women continues to be a priority for this government.

In recent times, especially in the month of November, we have made a couple of very big announcements. One is the call for letters of intent for the centres of excellence on women's health. Another is the announcement that my American counterpart, Donna Shelala, the U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services, and I will be co-hosting a forum on women's health in March 1995 here in Ottawa.

As well, we have a number of initiatives, including the prenatal nutrition program and programs addressing women and tobacco use. We have also been doing a lot of work on ensuring that women are a part of clinical trials.

In everything we do, we continue to check on the effects on women and their health.

## PRESENCE IN GALLERY

**The Speaker:** My colleagues, I wish to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of the Hon. Dr. Martin Bartenstein, federal Minister of the Environment of the Republic of Austria.

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear.

\* \* \*

## POINTS OF ORDER

### QUESTION PERIOD

**Mr. Ed Harper (Simcoe Centre, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, during question period, in an answer to a question from the member for St. Albert, in a very feeble attempt to justify the infrastructure program the finance minister said that it was justified on the basis that the member for Simcoe Centre kept writing letters requesting money.

While we cannot call a minister a fibber, I think we have to make sure that the truth comes out. The truth is that there was one letter written and it involved the private sector. That is the only letter that was written.

**The Speaker:** I think the point has been made.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

## BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

**Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval, BQ):** With a very short preamble, Mr. Speaker, I would like to know from the government House leader what our legislative menu will be.

[English]

**Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I want to make it clear that I am only going to make one statement right now.

The weekly business statement is as follows. We will continue today and tomorrow with Bill C-83, respecting the environmental auditor general; followed by Bill C-100, the financial institutions legislation; followed by Bill C-52, the public works and government services departmental reorganization.

On Monday we will begin with Bill C-108, the housing bill, and then return to the point on the list where we left off on Friday.

I would add to the list of bills for next week Bill C-99, the Small Business Loans Act amendments; Bill C-94, the fuel additives bill; Bill C-101, the transportation legislation; and Bill C-107, the British Columbia treaties bill.

Finally, Tuesday, November 28, and Thursday, November 30, shall be opposition days.



(1505 )

## POINTS OF ORDER

### QUESTION PERIOD

**Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance and Minister responsible for the Federal Office of Regional Development-Quebec, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in an earlier statement in the House an answer that I gave was qualified as feeble. My point of order is that it was in fact incredibly decisive and strong. In any event, I withdraw the s.

### BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

**Mr. Ray Speaker (Lethbridge, Ref.):** On a point of order, I have a question for the House leader of the government with regard to potential legislation coming before the House.

**The Speaker:** My colleague, you will recall that last Thursday we had a very brief exchange on this. Of course I will permit clarification of whatever is coming up. We do not usually do any dealing here on the floor, so I know that the question will be quite to the point.

**Mr. Speaker (Lethbridge):** Could the hon. House leader of the government indicate whether there is going to be any consideration with regard to legislation on unemployment insurance on the list he gave today?

**Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, legislation on that topic was not on the list I read out today.

All I can suggest to my hon. friend is that he keep an eye on the Order Paper.

## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[Translation]

### AUDITOR GENERAL ACT

The House resumed consideration of the motion.

**Mrs. Monique Guay (Laurentides, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I was looking forward to speaking on third reading of Bill C-83 because of the debate we had last Monday on an amendment we tabled that would have deleted paragraphs (a) to (h) in clause 21(1) of the bill. I very much wanted to

clarify a fundamental difference between members of the Bloc Quebecois and other members in this House.

We in the Bloc Quebecois are sovereignists and we come from Quebec. In other words, we support Quebec's sovereignty and are opposed to any form of intrusion in its jurisdictions, while seeking to expand those jurisdictions until Quebecers decide to have their own country.

Obviously we do not have the same outlook as the other members of this House, who are federalists. When a bill is tabled, we do not consider or analyze the bill in the same way the Liberals, Reform members and the remaining Conservatives do, who are federalists. They still believe in federalism but we do not. They believe in intrusion and imposition but we do not.

It is only normal that we should see bills like the one we are discussing today as potential for encroachment on Quebec's jurisdictions, while the other parties do not see it that way.

The deep-seated convictions of each and everyone of us mean that our points of view are different. We always try to assess the short and longer term impact of legislation on the prerogatives of the provinces. And when we consider the longer term effects, we feel that Bill C-83 will have a negative impact on the prerogatives of Quebec and thus on the environment.

From our point of view, the environment must be a provincial responsibility if we are to protect it, preserve it and, in many cases, restore it. We think it is clear the provinces have come a long way and today have most of the responsibilities in this area.

It is up to them to respond to their people and to pass effective legislation and set up programs and projects to preserve the environment. Many are already doing so, with good results. Quebec has assumed its responsibilities and done its homework. Furthermore, Quebec has led the way in a number of areas, including environmental assessment.

(1510)

Looking at the federal side, there is not much to get excited about. The environmental effects are very watered down, and interest in the environment is not all that high and is a relatively recent thing. On the other hand, what is most remarkable about the federal government, the Liberal government in particular, is its great desire to become the saviour of the environment and to push aside the provinces more and more. It does this by riding over them roughshod, duplicating legislation, regulations, programs. The effects of this desire to interfere and to take over the helm at any price are very harmful to both the environment and the economy.

Bill C-83 has not escaped this constantly increasing desire by the feds to throw their weight around in the environmental area, as in a number of others. I wanted to explain this fundamental difference between us and the

other members of this House because of what the hon. member for Davenport said about me last Monday. He wondered, and I quote: “-is it perhaps that the member for Laurentides badly needs a psychiatrist to remove her obsession with federal-provincial relations, her obsession with seeing under every chair a federal monster, a federal presence which may disrupt the quiet life of the people in her riding?”

I personally feel that the member for Davenport has defined our fears very well. I could not have depicted the federal government as well myself. And if he defines himself in that way, then surely the definition must be an apt one. Thank you, dear colleague, for that revealing definition.

You will understand that following such a definition, we will see the federal monster not under the chair, as you said, but on the chairs in front of us.

I am rather in a jocular mood today. I have to be, otherwise I would probably have to see a psychiatrist as the hon. member for Davenport suggested. As for me, I would never dare to suggest that my colleague from Davenport consult his geriatrician because of his retarded and old-fashioned ideas. I respect him to much to make such a suggestion. Yet, it is obvious that he looks at Bill C-83 with the eye of a federalist while I see it as a sovereignist.

However, the hon. member goes a bit too far when he accuses us of being against the health of Canadians, against the integration of environment and economy, against the protection of ecosystems and against the prevention of pollution. This is getting close to demagoguery and intellectual dishonesty.

**The Speaker:** Dear colleague, you used the expression “intellectual dishonesty”. Perhaps you could consider using words that are more appropriate. I wish you would. I am not asking you to withdraw but simply to reconsider.

**Mrs. Guay:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Do you wish me to withdraw that part?

**The Speaker:** No.

**Mrs. Guay:** Very well. Thank you.

We, sovereignists are as much if not more interested in ecology than most Liberal, Reform and Conservative members, the federalists in this House. To say that we are against the environment, in particular against sustainable development, because we do not support bill C-83 is going a bit far.

We are the ones who initially proposed the creation of a position of environment auditor within the auditor general's office. The minister took up the Bloc's idea and introduced the bill.

Besides, the auditor general, Denis Desautels, said in committee that he was already performing this role and could continue to do so if given more resources.

This seemed to us the best solution, the most efficient, the least expensive and the most logical. But the Liberals went overboard on this. They stuck doggedly to the promise they had made in the red book and suggested the creation of an independent office of the Commissioner of the Environment.

They suggested furthermore to renew the mandate of the auditor general in this area, even to give him additional resources. In other words, the Liberals wanted two independent offices, two auditors to perform the same task. What a fine way to manage. The Liberals wanted to create expensive and inefficient overlaps within the federal machinery itself.

#### (1515)

So, if they are advocating creating duplication in their own house, one can certainly understand our reluctance and concern as to the commitment of these same people not to interfere in provincial jurisdiction. One can imagine the chaos and the administrative mess created by two environmental auditors. Such a situation would have been intolerable, and detrimental to the environment itself.

The Minister of the Environment—the best we ever had according to the member for Davenport, who is very humble since he himself has been a Minister of the Environment before—was clever enough to follow through. She introduced Bill C-83 at first reading stage on April 25. At that time, we were in favour of the bill.

Later on, in committee, everything changed completely. Eager to lay it on, the Liberals suggested amendments that clearly demonstrated their annoying tendency to think that environmental protection is an exclusive federal role. When these amendments were tabled, for that matter, they were in for a bumpy ride, in fact it almost degenerated into a farce. At first, the Liberals moved amendments and voted on them. Next, relying on a rule rarely invoked, they cancelled these same amendments only to move new ones and take another vote. I want to point out that no amendment moved by the Bloc Québécois carried.

So, the whole amendment stage was marked by confusion and turmoil. It seemed that the Liberals themselves could not understand each other; they appeared to be torn between public servants and politicians. That resulted in the Liberal amendment that modifies the bill by adding section 21.1, from (a) to (h). This added clause is what had led us to fear increased federal interference in provincial jurisdiction, and that is why we reject this bill. Liberals and Reformers are doing their best to convince us that this is not the case, but we see things differently.

We have been called obsessed, paranoid, we have been told we have a phobia against federalism. Fine. We have every right to feel that way, considering the environmental record of the federal government. We would not want the government to do more when it cannot even reach its own objectives in its own jurisdiction.

There are examples. The issues dealt with by the Liberals in the last two years and more clearly demonstrate that they

are far from keeping their red book promises and that the minister, whom the member for Davenport has been praising for the last few days, failed on all counts. Indeed, criticism levelled by environmentalists at the Minister of the Environment, who is so very competent according to the member for Davenport, has been getting harsher and harsher, lately.

Environmentalists, the provinces, experts and reporters are forthright in their assessment of the minister's work and action. Disappointment is felt everywhere. The minister's abilities are regularly called into question. Bill C-83 is itself a telling example of the government's weakness. The red book proposed an independent auditor. Liberals in the standing committee proposed the same. The result is that the minister is meeting them halfway: half result, half failure. And now the Liberals are bragging about their minister's accomplishments.

One would have to be really blind or totally soft in the head to congratulate the minister on this issue. The least we can say is that the Liberals are a spineless lot.

Another issue is endangered and threatened species. If I were a Liberal, a federalist, I would find that the minister's position on this is very poor, and that her plan of action leaves much to be desired. In fact, the member for Davenport himself has tabled a private member's bill, Bill C-275, which is aimed at protecting species. Is the very competent minister supporting this bill? Why is that legislation not part of the government agenda?

We, Quebec sovereignists, are very happy with the minister's half measures in this area. In Quebec, we are quite capable of taking care of our species. But if I were a Liberal, a federalist, I would not find that the minister's performance in this area is not very good. The greenhouse gas issue? Another issue where the minister is incapable of reaching her objectives. The provinces seem increasingly to want to distance themselves from the minister on this issue. The same holds true for the whole issue of harmonization with the provinces.

**(1520)**

The provinces do not seem to like the minister's heavyhandedness, as she is more intent on imposing the federal will than harmonizing. That is another failure of the Liberals and their very competent minister.

As for the CEPA, the Canadian Environment Protection Act, we are still waiting for an answer from the minister. She is late, and that in spite of the fact the committee clearly asked that she meet the deadline. Is the minister really looking after her responsibilities? I will let you answer that question. However, to ask the question is to answer it.

The *Irving Whale*, MMT, federal BCPs, etc., all these issues have something in common. Of course, they fall under the responsibility of the environment minister, but mainly they stand out as failures or as very sensitive issues whose management can only be described as incompetent

and dominated by petty politics. Are the members opposite asleep? Are they not aware of all the mistakes their minister is making and of her inability to run her department? How distinguished Liberal members, true environmentalists albeit federalists, unfortunately, can lavish such praise on the minister is beyond me.

From a sovereignist perspective, Bill C-83, as explained earlier, poses a very real threat of federal intrusion into a provincial area of jurisdiction. Looking very closely at clause 21.1, one can see this clearly.

Dealing at first with sustainable development, this clause refers further on, through subclauses *a* to *h*, to several items that are under provincial jurisdiction. True, the Liberals claim that these are merely general goals related to sustainable development. We think there is more to it than that if you look beyond the words and this list of goals. Over the long term, these goals will encourage federal departments to intrude upon the jurisdictions of other government levels. The fact that a commissioner will measure the performance of departments against these goals in their programs or projects will be an incentive for them to do more and to get better results, even if they overstep their own area of jurisdiction.

Thus, under clause 21.1, a department encroaching on an area of provincial jurisdiction will get a positive appraisal from the federal commissioner. There was certainly nothing else to be expected from the Liberal committee members. True to themselves, they repeated the same arguments they had put forward when we were studying the CEPA, the Canadian Environmental Protection Act.

Sustainable development, a concept which the Liberals use a great deal to crowd out the provinces, is an ideal all societies should strive for.

Let us be clear. What is at stake here is not the validity of this principle, but the way it is implemented.

The Bloc Québécois not only recognizes the validity of the principle, but also the need, not to say the urgent need, to translate it into concrete measures.

We believe this principle should be implemented by the provinces because they have the overriding jurisdiction over the environment. It is up to the provinces to promote the conditions needed for sustainable development.

In a federal system, the principle of sustainable development takes on a new dimension, that is respect for jurisdictions and areas of authority. Obviously, the squandering of both financial and human resources in order to maintain a dual structure, is in no way sustainable.

However, clause 21.1 provides for the commissioner to monitor the progress of the various departments, by taking into consideration criteria which clearly come under areas of provincial jurisdiction.

Clause 21.1(a) deals with the integration of the environment and the economy. In fact, this part of the commissioner's mandate can turn into subsidy programs for suppliers or targeted purchase programs. For example, the Department of Public Works and Government Services can set so-called "environmental" standards for some very specific purchase programs.

**(1525)**

Let us say that the department wants to buy 10,000 sheets of plywood, but that the award of this contract is subject to some sustainable development standards stipulated in the purchase program. The commissioner comes in, does his job, examines the purchase program and realizes that the program does not meet some objectives, such as maintenance of the resource, the wood fibre used, or that the process used causes too much pollution.

In other words, the environment commissioner assesses the purchase program and concludes that the standards do not promote sustainable development. In his report, he then urges the department to upgrade its criteria.

But, in this case involving the purchase of sheets of plywood, the whole industry comes under the provincial jurisdiction, thus under provincial criteria. What will happen if the federal criteria are not compatible with the Quebec criteria? What will industries do in such a mess? Who is better able to impose criteria and standards? The federal minister, under the guidance of the commissioner, or the Quebec minister?

There is no doubt in my mind that the provinces, which already have jurisdiction in this matter, are in a better position to manage their own affairs, that is, in this case, the forest industry and its pollutants.

This situation could occur in each and every department. One can easily imagine the jurisdictional problems that such situations could cause. This kind of back-door underhanded interference is unacceptable. I would like to hope that federalists will be bright enough to understand this situation and recognize that it is quite probable.

Other examples show that the federal government has used its spending power several times to launch programs or projects in areas of provincial jurisdiction. In many cases, after a few months, the federal government withdrew and let the provinces, especially the province of Quebec, foot the bill or assume responsibility for cancellation.

Item (b) is about protecting the health of Canadians. That makes the people on the other side jump and rant on about us, saying that the Bloc is against protecting the health of Canadians and Canadians being in good shape.

What we want is for Quebecers, Ontarians and Albertans to be in good health. Health is a matter of exclusive provincial jurisdiction. It incumbent upon the provinces to prevent environmental degradation from threatening public health.

How far could the federal government go with this clause? It is a question the Liberals should answer.

Once again, duplication of standards and competition with provincial standards are inefficient and costly, for governments as well as for businesses and individuals. Again, the federal government opens the door to further jurisdictional quarrels.

Considering the crystal clear position of provinces on this issue, it is difficult to understand the attitude of the federal government. This is further proof that the Liberals have completely failed to grasp the repeated requests for change made by Canadians and Quebecers.

Clause 21.1(c) deals with the protection of ecosystems. As owners and managers of the land, the provinces have jurisdiction over the management of ecosystems. For example, to support this role, Quebec has created 17 national parks. It also adopted legislative tools to ensure the protection of biodiversity.

Provinces that have not done this must take action and meet the demands of the international community, which, for example, has criticized, in the OECD report, the environmental performance of Canada in the protection of ecosystems.

Bill C-98, an act respecting the oceans of Canada, is an object of concern for the protection of ecosystems. With this bill, the minister of Fisheries and Oceans, the saviour of our nation and of our turbot, strips the Minister of the Environment of her jurisdiction over this area.

**(1530)**

He says that he wants to take full responsibility for the protection of ecosystems. We can well imagine the commissioner asking the minister of Fisheries to impose standards on a municipal waste water treatment plant because it pollutes an ecosystem where specific species of fish live. But municipal waste waters fall under the exclusive jurisdiction of provinces. Is it not a direct interference with provincial jurisdiction?

Paragraph (d) is about meeting Canada's international obligations. The majority of these international commitments were made on behalf of the provinces, which are sometimes the last to be informed of Canadian positions. That goes to show the contempt in which the provinces are held by the federal government.

For example, Canada made serious mistakes by committing to reduce greenhouse gases to an extent far greater than what some of the most directly concerned provinces would have accepted. These are a few things that make us doubt the will of the federal government to respect the provinces. Section 21.1 of Bill C-83 is evidence of the contrary.

Under the guise of environmental protection objectives, the federal government is encroaching further on provinces' jurisdictions. I would also like to say a few words about the

opportunity this bill gives individuals and groups to put pressure through petitions. Allow me to be sceptical about the effectiveness of these petitions, which will be treated the same way they are treated now by the government: they will simply be tabled in the House. Obviously petitions do not change anything and do not influence anybody, including ministers.

As I have said before, lobbyists and ministers go hand in hand and petitions are an exercise in futility. It is ridiculous to claim that the petition tabling process provided for in Bill C-93 will be a formidable weapon for the protection of the environment. The minister has not reinvented the wheel with this idea.

To conclude my remarks, I will say this: the commissioner of the environment must not encourage or even support this offhand attitude that characterizes federal interventions as a whole. I would like to read to you an excerpt from a document on the impact of federalism, published by the Quebec government in August 1995, and I quote: "Quebec's effectiveness and its ability to meet its objectives are increasingly hindered by the intransigence shown by the federal government in areas such as environmental assessment, the inconsistency of its interventions in relation to those of Quebec, including the sudden elimination of grant program funding and regulatory duplication in the pulp and paper and mining industries, the derogatory remarks contained in the report of the House of Commons Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development, and the fact that the federal government is forcing the adoption of its strategies in areas that should largely be under provincial jurisdiction, such as toxic substances, pollution prevention and sustainable development."

The role of the commissioner of the environment is not to promote duplication. On the contrary, he should encourage the various levels of government to respect each other's areas of jurisdiction. By giving so explicitly to the commissioner of the environment the mandate to monitor the extent to which sustainable development objectives are met, members of the committee have unduly politicized the role of the commissioner. We hope that, in the medium term, the use he will make of this mandate will have no impact on his credibility and his impartiality.

[English]

**The Speaker:** My colleagues, for the first three intervenors there will be no questions and comments.

**Mr. Paul Forseth (New Westminster-Burnaby, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity to speak today on Bill C-83, which will amend the Auditor General Act.

(1535 )

Should this bill go on from this House to the other place and be given royal assent, Canada will be the proud owner of a brand new environmental commissioner, so it is said. The commissioner will have all the bells and whistles of the

limousine, yet little gas to drive the wheels. The hands of the commissioner will be tied to the auditor general, who will ultimately have the final say on everything the commissioner does.

I want to read a promise from the Liberals' red book on page 64:

Our second task will be to appoint an Environmental Auditor General, reporting directly to Parliament, with powers of investigation similar to the powers of the Auditor General.

I want to briefly compare this promise to what is proposed in Bill C-83. The red book promises that the environmental auditor general would report directly to Parliament. Bill C-83 has the commissioner reporting to Parliament through the auditor general under his office, which is hardly what one would call direct.

Reformers believe that the environment should be protected. We believe there is a place for critical review of what the government is doing with respect to the protection of the environment. It is our wish that this person be objective and independent as well as critical. It is also our wish that this person fit within fiscal reality.

Some Liberal members across the floor may think I am referring to exactly what is in Bill C-83, but I suggest that they read the bill a little more closely.

The commissioner cannot be an independent figure. In fact the commissioner might as well be a clerk of the auditor general. In other words, the commissioner is simply a staff member of the auditor general's office and subject to the larger pressures and priorities of that office.

I want to reassure members of the House that Reform is not opposed to the internal structure of the bill. We are simply opposed to the fact that money is being spent on a lot of status building trappings for a person whose job is already performed by the auditor general.

During the environment committee's clause by clause consideration of the bill, the Reform Party proposed that any reference to the word "commissioner" be dropped and replaced by the term "auditor general". I was not surprised to see that our amendment was voted down. It would be a cardinal sin, would it not, for any government member to vote in favour of an opposition amendment. We know how the petulant Prime Minister likes to punish his members.

I believe our amendment would have strengthened the bill in efficiency as well as cost effectiveness. Allow me to explain that point.

We all know that the auditor general makes reports on how the government is undertaking certain environmental initiatives. Most recently, in his 1994 report, the auditor general reported on the environmental partners fund and the ice services branch of the Atmospheric Environmental Service. In the 1995 report Mr. Desautels reported on environmental management systems and environmental

hazardous wastes. Allow me to briefly go through the report on hazardous wastes from the May 1995 report. The auditor general cites background information, audit objectives, observations and recommendations on the storage and destruction of PCBs.

It is no secret to Canadians that as a country we have a tremendous problem with PCB waste. We have been stockpiling the contaminated wastes for years. Now we are trying to get rid of it at the lowest possible cost. I read recently that Canadian companies hold a total of 127,025 tonnes of PCBs at 3,216 storage sites across the country. This number includes 495 federal sites containing 5,206 tonnes.

This is outrageous. What is even more scandalous is the fact that the government continues to do little about it. The minister may talk of studies that are being done, but studies are not going to help the people of Sydney, Nova Scotia, home of one of Canada's most polluted industrial wastelands. The Sydney tar ponds are presently contaminated by over 700,000 tonnes of toxic chemicals, including PCBs, coal tar, volatile aromatics, acid drainage and raw sewage. The minister says that progress is being made. Yet to date less than 90 tonnes of waste have been incinerated, not even 1 per cent.

We are not talking about storage sites holding newspapers or pop cans waiting to be recycled. These are sites holding a substance banned in Canada in the late 1970s. It is a dangerous toxic site and it is harmful to health.

In many communities laden with a PCB problem, a steady rise in the cancer rate is not uncommon. In fact Sydney is now known as Canada's cancer capital, with a rate almost three times the national average.

**(1540)**

The auditor general's report on managing hazardous waste outlines the role Environment Canada should play in the management of PCBs. It states the following:

The Department provides the federal voice at CCME and federal leadership in the development and implementation of federal-provincial initiatives to regulate the use of PCBs and the storage and destruction of PCB wastes. The Department also spearheads the federal part of the national initiative by co-ordinating the activities of federal owners of PCBs and providing advice to both headquarters and regional levels on the storage, transportation and treatment of PCB waste.

In May 1994 the auditor general put forward his report on the management of hazardous waste. Now, one year and six months later, what has the federal government done to improve the PCB problem? Nothing. What is the government going to do? I am open to hear all the answers; however, I believe they will perhaps maintain the status quo. Again, the status quo really is nothing. I doubt that a commissioner will make much difference.

The auditor general clearly spelled out for the government that PCB sites need to be cleaned up. How much more can I stress the point the auditor general made? He did not say it would be simply a good idea to clean up the sites. Rather, he stated that it was essential in order that the health of Canadians would not be put in jeopardy.

The government did not respond to the report. Therefore, if the government is clearly not acting on the auditor general's reports, I want to know what will be so special about the reports that will be written by the commissioner that will make the government act. Perhaps when we have time for questions and comments some hon. members from the government benches will be able to enlighten me on how they would be more apt to follow the warnings of the commissioner when they do not now follow those of the auditor general.

Bill C-83 will give us an environmental commissioner, which we are told will whip the government into shape with respect to environmental issues. That is something the auditor general has apparently been trying to do.

The bill outlines that the commissioner will have several tasks to undertake. One of those tasks is the handling of petitions. A resident of Canada will now be able to file a petition concerning an environmental matter in the context of sustainable development. The commissioner would then forward it to the appropriate minister for whom the petition was intended. The recipient minister would then be required to acknowledge receipt of the petition within 15 days. In addition, that same minister would be required to respond to the petition within four months. In the bill it notes that the four-month period might be extended by the minister if the petitioner and the auditor general were both notified that it would not be possible to respond within the allotted four months.

What the bill is really saying is that we need legislated permission for someone to write a complaint letter. Maybe with this new wrinkle the minister might even answer the mail.

Another duty of the new commissioner will be to monitor whether or not federal departments have met the objectives set out in their sustainable development strategies. The bill's amendment to section 24 would require that each federal department prepare a sustainable development strategy and table it in the House of Commons. Departments will have to table their strategies within two years of the bill coming into force. After that, strategies would have to be updated every three years.

In a nutshell, this will be the job description of the new environmental commissioner within the auditor general's office. In my opinion, the tasks themselves are reasonable. The monitoring of departments in terms of sustainable development makes sense, especially when the Ministry of the Environment has failed to do its job on this score. The accepting and passing on of petitions is good as well. It is essential that constituents know that the petitions they file are being reviewed and acted on. However, there is a fundamental flaw in the bill. While the bill creates this high

profile commissioner, it gives the person no independent power. That option was rejected by the government.

I mentioned that the job description in the bill was reasonable, and I believe that monitoring may make a difference. However, there is no need to create a commissioner to follow through on these objects when the auditor general still has the final say, and his officials have been doing the job for some time.

I believe that all of the above mentioned responsibilities could be taken on by the auditor general and be performed effectively and efficiently on a regular basis if he were given the resources. However, I can clearly see why the Minister of the Environment chose to go the route she did. It makes it look as if the government is moving ahead with its environmental responsibilities and fulfilling this longstanding promise. I believe we call this window dressing.

(1545)

We are in a time of fiscal crisis. The deficit is out of control and things appear to be getting worse instead of better. We need to be tightening our belts instead of loosening them. Government departments need to be amalgamated and consolidated to streamline services. We need to save money at every turn.

The same applies to the issue we are discussing today in the bill. While the ideas are reasonable, the process is not. The duties of the environmental commissioner should be part of the auditor general's regular duties. The auditor general could easily expand and juggle his staff to help in the monitoring of government departments and the transferring of petitions from constituent to minister.

Such a small ordinary solution would not make the minister look environmentally green among her international cohorts. The Liberals overreaching undeliverable promises are now revealed. This is exactly the fundamental problem with the thinking of the government. Image seems to be everything.

Let me inform the Minister of the Environment of what I am hearing from my constituents about how governments should run. They want government to function without the flare and the Cadillac style. They want a government that is fiscally responsible and accountable. They also want an environment minister who puts environmental results at the top of the agenda within a fiscally responsible framework.

The bill creates redundancy. I have never heard where redundancy was a synonym for responsibility.

In May 1994 the Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development tabled a report entitled "The Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development". This was the result of many long hours of hearing witnesses and reviewing documentation. I have highlighted some very interesting observations, primarily some from the comments made by the auditor general, Mr.

Desautels. He told the committee that his office has for many years "been carrying out much of what would be the main audit responsibilities of an environmental auditor general".

The auditor general also stated that the office, referring to the current auditor general's office, will ensure that in carrying out its responsibilities it makes a positive contribution through audit to the protection and improvement of the national and global environment.

In my reading of the standing committee's report my conclusion was that the auditor general also thinks that his office could handle the increased responsibility and assume the role of monitoring the sustainable development strategies of federal departments.

I want the House to hear the six points the auditor general made when he appeared before the committee on why his office could continue to audit environmental sustainable development issues without any commissioner.

First, there would be no need for a new bureaucracy as an audit infrastructure already exists in the office of the auditor general. It would be less costly to the taxpayer as the office already has the structure in place to provide appropriate training, carry out research, develop methodology and carry out audit work.

Second, the independence, objectivity and credibility of the office of the auditor general are already established.

Third, there would be no confusion or duplication of roles as there might be with a new office of the environmental auditor general.

Fourth, the principles of sustainable development would be reinforced in that the environmental issues are audited together with economic and social ones.

Fifth, one auditor would create less disruption in the organization being audited if an additional external audit were also at work.

Sixth, the auditor general's office through its existing relationships with provincial legislative auditors can promote concurrent and/or joint federal-provincial audits of multi-jurisdictional environmental issues. This could help to overcome some of the problems related to the division of federal and provincial powers concerning environmental matters.

There is no question that the auditor general could undertake a more expansive role. He has said it to members of the standing committee. More important, if we were to ask the average person on the street we would discover that the vast majority is totally opposed to new levels of bureaucracy.

My constituents in New Westminster-Burnaby feel there is already far too much bureaucracy in government. When

they find out that the government is passing legislation to add another level, my office phone might ring off the hook.

I refer to another important statement in the committee's report which reflects exactly what the Reform proposed in clause by clause consideration in committee:

-it would appear that the Auditor General Act does not need to be amended in order for the auditor general, on his own volition, to expand his audit activities in the areas of environmental and sustainable development auditing. On the other hand, the act will have to be amended if the government wishes to make environmental and sustainability auditing a mandatory activity. The committee members were of the opinion that the Auditor General Act should be amended to this effect.

**(1550)**

The Reform Party believes in sustainable development. We believe that through responsible economic development and the economic capacity that results, the environment will be sustained for all Canadians to enjoy.

Let me also say that the Reform Party supports the federal government taking leadership in developing a new discipline of integrating economics and the environment. However, while we support the truest definition of sustainable development we also support going about change in the most economical and pragmatic way possible.

Bill C-83 is definitely not cost effective. The installation of the environmental commissioner could cost upwards of \$5 million in the next few years. We should consider the amount that was spent by the auditor general's office in 1993. In this year \$4.5 million or 7.5 per cent of the entire auditor general's budget was spent on audits of programs and activities of the federal government.

I do not believe that the activities of the commissioner will need \$5 million to operate. If the auditor general's office were to get just a portion of that amount, I am sure it would be able to hire the appropriate staff and perform the functions of the commissioner very admirably. However, we know it is about prestige and status. Prestige will be bought with a huge no cut contract for some so-called superstar and his or her appropriate entourage.

I cannot support a bill that does not take economic matters into consideration. If the government were serious about doing the right thing, it would have accepted Reform's proposal to get rid of the aspect of commissioner and hand over the responsibilities to the auditor general. Unfortunately such was not the case.

The environmental community and the Liberals when in opposition wanted a completely independent watchdog of the government concerning environmental matters. They saw the policy need and the need related to control, lines of accountability and the reporting structure. The independent commissioner was to have meaningful investigative powers and was intended to embarrass and expose laxity, rule breaking and poor administration on environmental

matters. Now that the Liberals are in government the red book's high sounding phrases are only phrases. The bill it has now brought forward as a government is much less than what it promised.

The decision has been made: no independent commissioner or environmental auditor general. If we are not to have one, why not facilitate the auditor general's office with a little more resources and some enhanced legislative mandate and encourage him to get on with it? Not the Liberals; they want it both ways.

There will be business as usual but the bill also creates a new title under auditor general who has a position identified and set out with legislative status. With a magic wand we have an environmental commissioner. There are great press release opportunities, a high profile appointment and international advertising for the position. I wonder if the superstar contract will be larger than the boss to whom he reports, the auditor general.

If we have to spend more on environmental auditing, it should give the auditor general some resources and an enhanced mandate. It should not try to fool the public into thinking that it has something that was promised. The government should do one or the other. I can imagine the morale problems these new favoured environmental kids will cause in the regular office of the auditor general.

The bill does not make sense from a public administration point of view. The whole exercise as constituted is not likely to be good dollar value. The bill tries to take things both ways, but no one is fooled. Either we have a real auditor general for the environment or we do not.

If it is to be a subset and a listed function of the current auditor general, let us be forthright about it. The expensive optics game of the bill is out of sync with what the country wants and needs. Whom are we trying to impress? Is it the public or maybe the senior deputy ministers of various ministries of the crown who have failed so far to fulfil their environmental duty under the law?

I am not buying it and I do not think the public will either. When Reformers are the ministers, the auditor general report will be regarded and acted on quickly and there will not be any overpaid superstar commissioner.

**Mrs. Jean Payne (St. John's West, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today in support of Bill C-83. The Liberal Party red book stated that the government would provide national environment and economic agendas. We also said that one of our priorities would be to appoint an environmental auditor general who would report to Parliament directly and would have powers of investigation similar to those of the auditor general. Bill C-83 fulfils this commitment and does even more.

**(1555)**

Bill C-83 demonstrates that the government is serious about environmental and sustainable development, that we are



willing to change the way government does business, and that government is not afraid to be held publicly accountable for what it does or does not do.

Federal government policies and operations have an impact on the decisions of Canadians, on the economy and on the environment. It is critical therefore that environmental and sustainable development considerations are integrated in government decision making. By getting its house in order the federal government can actively promote the shift to sustainable development throughout Canadian society. This is what Bill C-83 is all about.

The Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development deserves a large share of the credit for the bill. The committee examined the government's red book commitment to establish an environmental equivalent to the auditor general. It recommended the establishment of a commissioner of environment and sustainable development. It provided valuable input at report stage when it made several recommendations to improve the bill.

Bill C-83 explicitly incorporates environmental and sustainable development in the Auditor General Act. It would also give the auditor general the explicit legal mandate to include environmental effects alongside the traditional considerations of economy, effectiveness and efficiency among the considerations he uses to determine the observations he will bring to the attention of the House of Commons.

Bill C-83 will also provide the federal government with leadership in making the shift to sustainable development. The amendments will proactively promote sustainable development across all federal departments.

Under the act ministers will be required to table in the House sustainable development strategies that include their departments' activities and plans of action to further sustainable development. Departments will also be required to update their strategies every three years and ministers to table updates in the House.

Bill C-83 will authorize the auditor general to forward petitions on environmental matters from the public to the responsible ministers. These ministers must respond within a specified timeframe.

The amendments I have just mentioned are significant in and of themselves but the bill goes much further. It creates a truly independent commissioner of environment and sustainable development. The commissioner will be established within the office of the auditor general. This will strengthen the role of the commissioner, ensuring independence and greatly enhancing the auditing of the government's environmental performance. The office of the auditor general has clout. It is independent from government. It is well respected and has solid expertise that can be put to use at once.

There is another advantage to the innovation. Within the work of the auditor general issues of environment and sustainable development will be integrated directly with

economic considerations. This kind of integration is what sustainable development is all about.

To ensure his independence as an effective critic of government the commissioner will be appointed by the auditor general. The commissioner will be the auditor general's right hand person, helping him perform all his duties in so far as they relate to environmental and sustainable development.

The commissioner will monitor and report annually to the House on any aspects of sustainable development, environmental, economic or social, where they merit attention. These issues would include the extent to which departments are implementing their sustainable development action plans as set out in their strategies; the extent to which these action plans are effective and departments are achieving their sustainable development objectives; and the number, subject matter and status of petitions received by ministers.

The annual green report of the commissioner will not be the only report to the House on the government's sustainable development and environmental performance. The auditor general, assisted by the commissioner, may also report on environmental matters in his traditional reports to the House.

(1600)

These amendments are historic and unprecedented. They will have far reaching implications for the way the federal government does business. They ensure that no matter who the auditor general happens to be, environment and sustainable development will have a high profile in the work of the office. They will provide leadership on sustainable development by proactively promoting and operationalizing sustainable development across federal departments and across economic sectors of the country. They will hold the government fully accountable to the public for its leadership and progress in making the shift to sustainable development.

The government has taken a red book commitment and engaged Parliament and Canadians in fulfilling it. Contrary to what the Bloc member who spoke said, it was a commitment in our red book and not one of their ideas.

I look forward to Bill C-83 becoming law and to the appointment of a strong and independent commissioner.

[Translation]

**Mr. Roger Pomerleau (Anjou-Rivière-des-Prairies, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, It is with great pleasure that I rise to address Bill C-83, an Act to amend the Auditor General Act.

This bill seeks to achieve five specific objectives:

First, to ensure that environmental considerations in the context of sustainable development are taken into account in the auditor general's reports to the House of Commons.

Second, to provide for the appointment-as suggested by the Bloc Québécois-of a Commissioner of the environment and sustainable development.

Third, to impose requirements for responding to petitions received by the auditor general about federal environmental matters in the context of sustainable development.

Fourth, to provide for monitoring and reporting to the House of Commons on the activities of departments and the extent to which they have met the objectives and implemented the plans set out in their sustainable development strategies, and for reporting to the House of Commons on petitions.

Fifth, to require that each department's sustainable development strategies be prepared and tabled in the House of Commons.

From a technical point of view, if this bill is passed, a number of measures will have to be taken.

First, an adequate definition of what is meant by "sustainable development" will be necessary.

Second, the mandate of the Commissioner of the environment and sustainable development will have to be properly defined.

Third, we will have to ensure that the process for responding to petitions will adequately meet the requirements of the citizens who submit these petitions.

Finally, we will have to ensure that all departments have sustainable development strategies and that they meet the objectives set therein. This means that a major structure to monitor the activities of all departments will have to be put into place.

I said earlier that the first objective of Bill C-83 was to ensure that environmental considerations in the context of sustainable development are taken into account in the auditor general's reports to the House of Commons. In order to achieve this goal, all stakeholders must agree on a single definition of what sustainable development really means.

Bill C-83 includes such a definition; it says that sustainable development means "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs".

It is surprising, to say the least, that the Minister of the Environment decided to include this definition in the bill to amend the Auditor General Act, but that she has not yet included it in the Canadian Environmental Protection Act itself.

In her speech to introduce this bill in the House of Commons on September 18, the Minister of the Environment said this: "[...] one of the first departments the office of the commissioner will be looking at is my department, the Department of the Environment. We welcome the opportunity of independent public review because we believe it will accelerate the integration of the two key objectives of sustainable development and their integration into the economy".

**(1605)**

I hope that, during this review of the department's operations, the commissioner will have the opportunity to set the Minister of the Environment straight about this, because it would indeed not make much sense if the basic respecting the environment in Canada was not the first to include a definition of sustainable development.

The only possible explanation for this is the minister's inability to carry out her responsibilities properly. Several examples come to mind. The *Irving Whale* case is a well-known example, where the minister proved to be unable to deal properly with such a major issue and such a dramatic one, under the circumstances.

In that case, the office of the auditor general would obviously have much to do to meet the first objective of this bill.

The second thing that Bill C-83 does is provide for the appointment of a commissioner of the environment and sustainable development. To this effect, the duties that the future commissioner to the environment and sustainable development is expected to perform are described in clauses 22 and 23.

The following information can be drawn from reading these sections. First, the commissioner in question will report directly to the auditor general, assist the auditor general in the performance of his duties with respect to the environment and sustainable development. For instance, the commissioner will assess the effectiveness of action plans in meeting the objectives set out in departmental sustainable development strategies.

Second, the commissioner will follow up in the prescribed manner any petition received from a resident of Canada about an environmental matter in the context of this so-called sustainable development.

Third, the commissioner will make any examinations and inquiries that he deems necessary to monitor the extent to which each department has met the objectives set out in its own sustainable development strategy.

Finally, he will, on behalf of the auditor general, report annually to the House of Commons on the extent to which each department implemented its sustainable development plan and on anything in relation to the environment that he considers should be brought to the attention of the House.

I think it is important at this juncture to repeat to this House the comments made by Auditor General Denis Desautels when he appeared before the Environment and Sustainable Development Committee on October 3.

At that time he said the following-and I shall quote him extensively because I think that the Auditor General has put his finger right on the fundamental problem in this matter.

I shall be quoting from several pages of Mr. Desautels' testimony. He said: "When I last appeared before this Environment Committee, I also spoke of the expectations of the interested parties concerning what it was agreed at that time to call the 'auditor general of the environment', as no name had been found at that time. The extent of those expectations continues to be of concern to me" he continued. "I feel that there might be a gap between what interested parties such as the environmentalist groups want the commissioner to do, or hope that he can do, and the reality of the mandate and the available funding. In the coming months, it will be important to take care to reduce that gap as much as possible. I would, however, like to speak briefly of three areas in which such a gap might exist".

"When I came to speak to this Environment Committee in March of 1994, I stressed the importance of the office's independence and objectivity, which have justified its credibility since its creation in 1878".

"I pointed out that the responsibility for issues such as policy examination and environmental conflict resolution ought not to be a mandate of my office, since this might quickly and seriously endanger the long-standing independence, objectivity and credibility of the Auditor General".-I think that we can agree with Mr. Desautels on that.

"It is generally accepted in Canada that legislative auditors do not comment on the justification of policies. They concentrate on the application of policies"-policies defined by others, including this House.

"I might also add that our contacts with other auditor generals throughout the world indicate that the majority of my counterparts elsewhere interpret their mandate in the same way. "The proposed amendments to the Auditor General Act contain no provision authorizing the office to comment on policy, and we will not do so".

**(1610)**

I would like to intervene at this point. We see that the auditor general made it clear that he will not be involved in formulating policies but in enforcing policies formulated by others.

Mr. Desautels continued to discuss his role as ombudsman or what that role would be expected to be: "Similarly, neither the proposed amendments nor the current mandate of the office provide that the office should play the role of ombudsman. To play that role would be costly and might

have an adverse effect on the credibility of the Auditor General's Office and the commissioner of the environment and sustainable development".

He also talked about jurisdictions, saying: "Finally, the mandate of the Auditor General's Office, including the proposed duties of the commissioner of the environment and sustainable development, is limited to what falls within the purview of the federal government. Neither I nor the commissioner have or will have the authority to deal with matters that are a provincial or municipal responsibility. I think it is important to mention here that the mandate and duties of the office, including those of the commissioner"-and I underlined what Mr. Desautels said in my text-"cannot be a substitute for firm leadership by the government and consistent management and accountability on the part of the department. And this applies both to environmental and non-environmental programs and activities".

"It will be up to the department's senior management to carefully scrutinize programs, and to determine whether they achieve their objectives, whether they remain relevant, and also whether there are more efficient ways to achieve the same results. Such analysis is essential to sound program management and proper communication of audit information".

"A Guide to Green Government' published in June this year indicates that departments are to report annually on progress made on sustainable development in Part III of the Main Estimates. The guide also indicates that this regular progress report in the Main Estimates will require on-going monitoring and self-evaluation. As part of its responsibilities, senior departmental management, will have to monitor and evaluate its own progress. This is a fundamental managerial responsibility, both in the public and private sectors".

"The results of our work assessing programs indicate how hard it is for the government to implement good ways of measuring efficiency and to communicate practical information in this regard".

I think Mr. Desautels explains himself here and will indicate the thrust of his interpretation of this bill: "At a time of employee cuts and restructuring, I fear the challenge may not been taken up". The auditor general goes on to say: "In our experience, for departments to act positively, they must be given leadership, support and direction". "I think there may be some expectation that we will be the ones to establish reference points or criteria on which to measure the government's progress. We would become part of the day to day business of the government, and thus the traditional independence of the legislative auditor from operations would disappear. This could also be seen as a potential conflict of interest, because we would have to audit something we had developed".

This is the end of the auditor general's text. I have taken the liberty of reading much of it, because it is in fact the response of the auditor general to this bill, which establishes his guidelines and determines his responsibility. In his opinion, they do not seem to correspond to people's

expectations, and the auditor general himself says in fact: "I fear the challenge may not be taken up".

In short, the auditor general is telling us he cannot meet Parliament's expectations on the monitoring of activities of the departments covered by this bill.

**(1615)**

What in fact are these expectations the auditor general refers to? During debate at second reading, the parliamentary secretary to the Minister of the Environment said the following, and I quote: "Beyond the significant powers of the office, the very existence of the office of a commissioner of environment and sustainable development sends a powerful signal not only within the government itself but beyond the government into the reaches of Canadian society. They now know there will be somebody there, a monitor, an ombudsman, who will devote his or her duties to the environment and sustainable development in making sure the government itself practices what it preaches".

The remarks by the parliamentary secretary are somewhat at odds with those of the auditor general. This is made even more worrisome by the fact that, in the same speech, the hon. member for Lachine-Lac-Saint-Louis goes on to say, "The key issue here is if this commissioner of environment and sustainable development will be truly independent and have the necessary powers, autonomy, independence to ensure that he or she is listened to and that the public feels that through this office it has a voice and a say".

The auditor general's own description clearly shows that his role depends essentially on the government's real leadership and not on his own qualifications.

But, as we heard, the auditor general did say that playing the role of ombudsman could have a negative impact on the credibility of the auditor general's office and of the sustainable environment commissioner. During the same debate, the hon. member for Davenport had this to say about Bill C-83: "This is not a minor step. It is a remarkable one. It inserts in the mandate of the auditor general the importance of monitoring sustainable development strategy and implementing the meaning, significance and the interpretation of sustainable development. That is no minor feat".

Yet, the auditor general himself went to the trouble of toning down this interpretation of the role that will be played by the commissioner of the environment and sustainable development. The auditor general himself said that the proposed amendments to the Auditor General Act contained no provisions allowing the auditor general's office to comment on the validity of policies, and that they would not do so. That is what Mr. Desautels said.

I also want to point out that, in his September 18 speech, the member for Davenport said: "The role and the funding of the commissioner must be ensured so that they do not suffer in times of budget cuts. I am certain that this matter will be taken into account fully".

Let us hope that the reassuring words of the member for Davenport, who is surely full of good intentions, will be heard by the Treasury Board Secretariat, because the auditor general expressed concern in that regard, following his discussions with TBS. Mr. Desautels said: "I want to point out that, in spite of the additional resources made necessary by the amendments to the Auditor General Act, in 1997-98, the office will have reduced its budget by some \$7 million per year". Again, there is a contradiction.

There is another provision in the bill which should be looked at, namely the requirements to be imposed for responding to petitions received by the auditor general about federal environmental matters in the context of sustainable development. Clause 22 of the bill states how these petitions will be dealt with. That clause reads as follows:

- (1) Where the Auditor General receives a petition in writing from a resident of Canada about an environmental matter in the context of sustainable development that is the responsibility of a category I department, the Auditor General shall make a record of the petition and forward the petition within fifteen days after the day on which it is received to the appropriate Minister for the department.
- (2) Within fifteen days after the day on which the Minister receives the petition from the Auditor General, the Minister shall send to the person who made the petition an acknowledgment of receipt of the petition and shall send a copy of the acknowledgment to the Auditor General.
- (3) The Minister shall consider the petition and send to the person who made it a reply that responds to it, and shall send a copy of the reply to the Auditor General, within
  - (a) one hundred and twenty days after the day on which the Minister receives the petition from the Auditor General; or
  - (b) any longer time, when the Minister personally, within those one hundred and twenty days, notifies the person who made the petition that it is not possible to reply within those one hundred and twenty days and sends a copy of that notification to the Auditor General.
- (4) Where the petition is from more than one person, it is sufficient for the Minister to send the acknowledgment and reply, and the notification, if any, to one or more of the petitioners rather than to all of them.

**(1620)**

I would have much more to say on petitions, Madam Speaker, but you are signalling that my time is up.

To sum up, I would like to say this. We will be voting against this bill for very specific reasons, in spite of the fact that we had originally requested that a position of commissioner to the environment be established.

The auditor general tells us that his basic problem is that he does not believe that he will be able to fulfil this mandate adequately. He also tells us that the government's leadership in this matter is more important than his. And so far, on every issue—whether it is the *Irving Whale* or the Berlin agreements on greenhouse effect—the Minister of the Environment has failed to show the leadership required to allow us to believe with any degree of certainty that the commissioner of the environment would have any real power.

Third and last, I note also the very clear picture that my colleague the hon. member for Laurentides has painted for us in her quite accurate analysis of clause 21.1, which does invade areas of provincial jurisdiction.

[English]

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu):** It is my duty, pursuant to Standing Order 38, to inform the House that the question to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment is as follows: the hon. member for Brampton-unemployment.

**Mr. Boudria:** Madam Speaker, the speakers on this bill from here on in will speak pursuant to Standing Order 43(2). In other words, they will be sharing their time.

**Mr. Peter Adams (Peterborough, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I am truly delighted to rise to speak in support of Bill C-83, an act to amend the Auditor General Act. This act will create for Canada a commissioner for the environment and sustainable development.

I am particularly delighted in this case because this is a clear example of us fulfilling a commitment we made to Canadians in the red book, which was the basis of our election campaign. We said then that we would move Canada toward sustainable development. This bill is a very concrete step in that direction.

In the red book we recognized that there is no separation between a national environmental agenda and a national economic agenda. Since assuming office we have tried to implement that belief wherever possible. We have implemented it in our approach to planning and decision making within government. We have tried to integrate economic matters, social matters and environmental considerations. We understand that all these aspects of sustainable development can and must be co-ordinated to give Canadians what they want: a prosperous and healthy country in which we, our children, and our children's children can work to achieve our aspirations.

Environmental sustainable development must be an integral part of decision making in all federal departments. That means that decisions on new policies, programs, regulations, and laws as well as decisions on existing ones, must take that into account. It also includes decisions on how departments manage their buildings, facilities, and operations.

Strategies of sustainable development are a key part of Bill C-83. These strategies will take sustainable development from a concept to a real practice across all federal departments. Each minister will be required to table a sustainable development strategy for his or her department in this House within two years of the coming into force of this legislation.

By legal definition, sustainable development strategies must be results oriented. Each strategy will include the department's objectives and plans of action to obtain those

objectives. Every minister will in fact become a sustainable development minister.

We all now realize that sustainable development is not the sole responsibility of the environment minister. It is the responsibility of all ministers and indeed of us all as Canadians. As the parliamentary secretary said earlier, in an ideal world we would not need a Ministry of the Environment to monitor sustainable development in Canada because it should be the concern of all of us and of all ministries.

(1625)

These departmental strategies will also assist the new environmental and sustainable development commissioner in monitoring and reporting on the government's performance. The stated objectives and action plans will serve as meaningful and measurable benchmarks against which to assess each department's performance in making the shift to sustainable development.

Departments are committed to developing their sustainable development strategies and establishing their goals and action plans in an open manner, working with all interested parties. This will help to ensure that the departments establish meaningful and challenging targets.

In June the government released a guide to green government, which was endorsed by the Prime Minister and all ministers. The guide will assist federal departments and their stakeholders in the preparation of their sustainable development strategies.

Federal government departments differ in their mandates and in their abilities to influence Canada's sustainable development prospects. As a result, their strategies will differ, but clearly together they must present a coherent and consistent government approach to sustainable development.

Sustainable development is an evolving concept. Indeed, our understanding of sustainable development has evolved considerably in the past few years and it will continue to evolve as we grasp a further understanding of what it means as we move to operationalize it.

The guide I mentioned provides core concepts and principles underlying sustainable development as a starting point. The concepts and principles will likely continue to evolve over time and perhaps new concepts and principles will emerge.

Bill C-83 requires departments to update their sustainable development strategies and requires responsible ministers to table the updates in the House every three years. This allows the evolving nature of sustainable development and the lessons learned from operationalizing it to continually be incorporated into the strategies.

Another key aspect of Bill C-83 is the appointment of a commissioner of the environment and sustainable

development within the office of the auditor general. The commissioner will assist the auditor general in performing general auditing duties. He or she will also report annually to the House on any matter concerning sustainable development that he or she considers merits the attention of the House. The commissioner will not only strengthen the work of the office of the auditor general on the environment and sustainable development, he or she will also enhance the federal government's accountability for its actions or its inaction on the environment and sustainable development.

We are the first major country to build sustainable development into our economy in this way. It is becoming increasingly clear that those economies that take environmental costs into account are in fact the most efficient of modern economies.

In conclusion, Bill C-83 establishes a framework for sustainability across all federal departments and enhances the government's accountability to the House for its progress on sustainable development. We are not afraid of being held accountable in this way because we are building a record of accomplishments, a record of which we are proud.

Bill C-83 will have far reaching implications within the government and within our society as a whole. It will move Canada forward along the path from talking about sustainability to acting sustainably. I look forward to the speedy passage of this important legislation.

**Mr. Geoff Regan (Halifax West, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to speak on Bill C-83.

The Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development took on the task of examining the government's commitment to establish an environmental equivalent of the auditor general. This was in fact a key red book commitment. It is an idea that has been discussed and debated for many years. It is also an idea the government is making a reality in short order.

**(1630)**

The committee heard from many stakeholders representing a wide range of interests and opinions. Their testimony provided important insights into what must be done for Canada to achieve sustainable development.

The committee in preparing its report and the government in proposing Bill C-83 have paid careful attention to the message of stakeholders. The committee submitted its report in May of last year and the government responded just over a year ago. Its response was aimed at integrating economic, environmental and social factors in federal planning and decision making across all departments, just what the stakeholders had asked for.

Key aspects of that response include the amendments to the Auditor General Act with which we are involved today. The amendments would provide openness, transparency

and leadership by government on sustainable development and continued action to make sustainable development a real practice throughout the federal government. Bill C-83 is central to integrating the environmental and sustainable development in government planning decisions across all federal government departments.

Last year I had the pleasure of being part of the Special Joint Committee for the Review of Canada's Foreign Policy. For the first time as part of a review of foreign policy one of the areas we looked at was sustainable development and the environment. We can see more and more these days how much environmental issues are international matters.

The hon. member for Peace River is here today. He was also a part of that review. It was a very interesting process. I was pleased that for the first time as a committee we recognized in our report that the federal government should include as a major plank of its foreign policy the promotion of sustainable development around the world.

Why is it important for us to make environmental matters and sustainable development more of a priority in government? One reason is that we live in a world of limited measurable natural resources.

I asked a friend of mine, a professor of geography in Halifax, if we could measure the atmosphere, the amount of air around the world. He checked with a friend in a specialized area who was more knowledgeable on the particular topic and told me there were approximately five quadrillion tonnes of atmosphere around the world. That is about one one-millionth of the total mass of the earth. Twenty-one per cent of the atmosphere is oxygen.

It is measurable and finite which means that it is limited. There is not always lots more where that came from. We have to recognize therefore that if we can measure it and if we can limit it, we can also destroy it. We can damage it. That is a very important point to realize in thinking about the environment and the world we live in.

This is the only planet we know of that will sustain and support life. That is an important point too. If we damage this one we do not have another one to go to. It is unrealistic to think we can choose some other world or that we will have some way to transport billions of people to some other planet where we can survive if we damage this one.

There is a very narrow range of conditions in which life can exist, particularly human life. Is it possible for us as human beings to actually alter or change the conditions which sustain human life? It seems to me the answer to that question is yes. We now have solid evidence that we actually have changed the conditions. We are having an impact on the conditions.

This year 2,000 leading world experts on climate change came to the conclusion and agreed, after years of debating it and not being ready to agree, that human activity contributes to global warming. We are affecting climate

change. We are moving in the narrow range within which we can actually sustain human life. We should be aware of that very important point.

(1635)

The planet has a limited ability to support human life. Researchers at Cornell University in the U.S. determined in a study that the earth's biosphere could only produce enough renewable resources, food, fresh water and fish, to sustain about two billion people at European standards. That is not North American standards and we should know the difference. If members know much about how Europeans live, they will know they are less wasteful of resources. They tend to follow the three *rs* of reducing, reusing and recycling a little more than we do. They have done it for quite a while. They have a head start on the three *rs* that are so important for the environment. I hope we can follow their example and catch up quickly.

Not only in Europe but in North America we have to change our practices to try to follow the three *rs* of reducing our consumption; reusing our receptacles for pop, bottles of various kinds and other containers; and reducing the amount of packaging of products. Often we buy products with a lot more packaging than is required. I understand marketing problems but somehow marketers have to take into account environmental issues and find ways to market with less packaging.

The whole issue of sustainable development is a new issue in foreign policy and newer one in domestic policy. Today it must be a core issue in our domestic as well as foreign policy. Sustainable development is about integrating environmental, economic and social values into decision making. That is very important for our future. If we do not include all three in deciding what will be sustainable for us in the future, how we will live in a sustainable manner and how we will support social and other programs in a sustainable manner, we have big problems. We need to think about how much we value the environment, society and the people in it and the economy. We must consider all these points and not one at the exclusion of others.

When thinking of the environment we must think about how much are interests are endangered. If we realize that we live in a very narrow range of conditions that can support human life and that we can actually affect those conditions, change them and move them outside that range, we realize our interests are in danger.

One great problem for us is to determine how to move toward goals of greater employment that are so important and at the same time deal with tremendous challenges in the environment. That is a major challenge of the next 50 years but I hope we manage to deal with it sooner than that.

Should we increase our emphasis on sustainable development? Clearly the answer is yes. We have done it in foreign policy. We are now doing it by creating a role within the auditor general's office for a commissioner who will report directly to the auditor general and will file a report annually on how the government and all departments

are doing in environmental matters. It is very important to keep the government's feet to the fire on environmental matters to make sure it lives up to its responsibilities to promote sustainable development in every aspect of its activities.

I was very pleased to speak on the bill and I urge all members to give it speedy passage.

**Mr. Boudria:** Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

A while ago I invoked Standing Order 43(2). It is my understanding that the member for Davenport would perhaps like to speak slightly more than 10 minutes, if the House has no objection, with the understanding that it would conclude the speakers on the government side.

Perhaps he will speak more than 10 minutes. On the other hand there will be no other speakers so the effect will be the same, if the House agrees.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu):** Is that agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

(1640 )

**Hon. Charles Caccia (Davenport, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, the debate this afternoon has developed along five major areas of discussion as raised by opposition members.

The first area is whether the independence of the auditor general is in question as a result of the bill. The answer to that question is that it is not. The independence of the auditor general is maintained, is reinforced and is in full tradition developed by the House over the decades.

The second area concerns whether the bill adds an additional layer of bureaucracy and a cost that is unwarranted. Again the answer is no. It is actually a recommendation. As some members of the opposition have indicated, the bill reflects the recommendations made in committee by several members of the opposition to the effect that the measures should be as tight and as task oriented as possible with no unnecessary bureaucracy added to the existing one.

The third area is whether there is intrusion into provincial jurisdiction. This concern has been raised by different speakers this afternoon. The answer is simply no, there is no intrusion envisioned. No passage of the bill can be interpreted as an intrusion into provincial jurisdiction. I will elaborate on that later.

The fourth area raised deals with whether there is an ombudsman role for the proposed commissioner of sustainable development. The answer is probably yes for reasons I will elaborate in a moment.

The final area is whether the bill is in harmony with federal-provincial relations. The answer is also a very positive yes.

The member for Anjou-Rivière-des-Prairies referred to the appearance of the auditor general before the committee. He did us a good service because he reminded us of the important and delicate role the auditor general has to perform. He has to examine the way in which policies are implemented but he does not comment on the policy. We fully agree with that interpretation of the role of the auditor general, as the hon. member for Anjou-Rivière-des-Prairies has stressed. The bill correctly provides for the power to check on the manner in which policies are carried out but not on the content of the policies. The distinction is extremely important and we all agree on it.

What will this commissioner do? The commissioner will measure the performance of each federal department's plan. The commissioner will seek and request that the plan be updated every three years.

Who will prepare the plans? It will be the departments themselves. Some will prepare advanced plans. Presumably the Department of the Environment will want to prove that it is the best. Others will produce less ambitious plans. However the role of the commissioner will be to measure performance against the plan prepared by each federal department.

The word federal cannot be underlined a sufficient number of times. We are talking here about federal jurisdiction and no other jurisdiction. As I said, the plans will be updated every three years to improve their quality. We will learn to walk before we are able to run.

The parliamentary secretary was quoted by the member for Anjou-Rivière-des-Prairies as having said in the earlier debate that the commissioner would act as an ombudsman. The answer is yes. The commissioner will monitor the minister's replies to petitions. In that sense the commissioner will perform the role of ombudsman. The commissioner will also monitor the extent to which departments implement the action plans and departmental strategies, as I mentioned before, and report annually to the Chamber.

**(1645)**

In that sense alone the commissioner on behalf of the public will report to the public through the Chamber; a beautiful role and the quintessence of democratic accountability.

The member for New Westminster-Burnaby started his intervention by saying his party supports the general concept but criticizes it because "this will be money spent on status building trappings".

The reality of Bill C-83 is that it is exactly the opposite. This commissioner will not be a status building bureaucrat. This individual will be the right hand of the auditor general

and will report to the auditor general. The commissioner will be functioning on all matters related to sustainable development within the office of the auditor general. Therefore the commissioner will be performing in the best sense of the word by doing the most with the least possible budgetary requirements. Instead of creating a separate office the commissioner will be performing and expanding a role which the auditor general has initiated in recent times.

When he appeared before our committee the auditor general did say that some 7 or 8 per cent of his activities and budgetary resources are already devoted to environment and sustainable development matters.

The commissioner will somehow strengthen, widen and build on this role that evidently needs to be given statutory recognition and some resources in order to perform a job which the auditor general cannot perform with the resources available at the present time.

We have somehow come up with a very clever solution that does accommodate the desire to keep budgetary expenses to a minimum and at the same time permits us to assume an additional role, ensuring the federal jurisdiction does implement its commitment to the sustainable development goal we all have heard about.

Does Bill C-83 add new levels of bureaucracy? The answer is no. Is Bill C-83 a cost effective piece of legislation? Most definitely yes. Will the commissioner be as independent as he or she should be? The answer is yes because the commissioner operates within the independent office of the auditor general. Therefore political pressures are out of the question.

The criticism, which we always take seriously, saying Bill C-83 tries to add bureaucracy and is costly and politically oriented is not founded. Therefore it is important we set the record straight.

Then we come to the member for Laurentides, evidently preoccupied with federal-provincial relations. I do not know whether I could convince her, even if I were to repeat until midnight that there is no provincial interference in this bill. Evidently we have reached the point at which this argument can no longer follow a logical path.

**(1650)**

I assure the hon. member for Laurentides there is no danger of interference. There will be neither short term nor long term negative effects on Quebec. There is no danger to the environment of Quebec.

The government does not want to impose itself on provincial jurisdiction. The province of Ontario, which has already an equivalent commissioner for sustainable development, not only did not object to this initiative, it sent its commissioner to appear before the committee. She gave the committee good advice.



If Ontario does not object, why should Quebec? No other province has objected. No other jurisdiction has said anything. I do not recall receiving a letter from the Government of Quebec objecting to Bill C-83 not only during the debate but since the bill was introduced in the House.

The hon. member for Laurentides said her party was far more concerned with the environment than the Liberal Party. I am glad to hear that. If that is the case, I invite the Bloc Québécois to support the bill, a bill to protect the environment. A good member of Parliament from the province of Quebec should be glad to see any measures which improve the overall quality of the environment because, as we know, environmental issues know no boundaries. The better the entire North American continent performs in economic and environmental matters and in their integration, the better will be the health of the entire population. There is everything to be gained.

With respect to duplications, to my knowledge there is no duplication to be afraid of. On the contrary, there can be a very substantial and significant integration between the role of a provincial commissioner for sustainable development who operates within provincial jurisdiction and the federal commissioner.

Evidently the hon. member for Laurentides is blind to the fact that there is a federal territory. There is the north. Therefore the commissioner will be responsible for what happens on federal lands. Federal lands are quite extensive north of 60.

It is unfortunate both members of the Bloc Québécois could not resist the temptation to launch personal accusations against the Minister of the Environment. It has now become a permanent habit. I do not want to comment further on the matter except to say what I said on Monday, that we have the best environment minister we have ever had. She has taken very courageous stands. She is the first environment minister who has taken the matter of the *Irving Whale* to heart and begun to do something about it. I do not recall an initiative by the leader of the Bloc Québécois when he was Minister of the Environment with the previous Conservative government.

I found it amusing when the hon. member for Laurentides objected to section 21(1). She went over each of the points which outlined the purpose of the commissioner. When she reached point (d), meeting international obligations, she said the provinces are never consulted or told about Canada's commitments. That is not true. The provinces are always consulted before the government makes an international commitment. Not only that, in almost every Canadian delegation travelling to an international gathering there is a representative of Quebec or representatives of more than one province. In almost every international delegation the member for Laurentides will not be able to prove that Quebec is not represented.

(1655)

The amusing part on the point she objected to so much about international obligations, which has to do with the question of the commitment taken by Canada on carbon dioxide, is that it was her leader, the leader of the Bloc Québécois in 1991 in Bergen, who committed Canada to the question of reducing carbon dioxide emissions. It was he who did it on behalf of Canada.

Today we have this absurdity of the hon. member for Laurentides objecting to an initiative taken by her own leader in 1991. What a sham.

Let us move to point (a) of 21(1). The member for Laurentides says the integration of the environment and the economy will work against the provincial jurisdiction because of procurement policies. This is quite an acrobatic leap of logic, if it can be described that way. The integration of the environment and the economy will be measured within the performance of that particular department.

The member for Laurentides was not a member of the committee when we wrote that report, that is true, so one cannot expect her to know the report well. At least she should know how the bill applies in practice. It will be applied within the performance of a plan prepared by the department. That plan will be submitted to the House of Commons every year for comments. To bring in this red herring of procurement policies is an unusual feat of imagination.

The member for Laurentides also objects to the second principle, the one of protecting the health of Canadians. The health of Canadians is not just a provincial responsibility. We protect the health of Canadians at the border. We protect the health of Canadians in interprovincial matters. No one has the monopoly, and the role of the provinces is extremely important and complements the federal jurisdiction.

It is quite interesting that three weeks ago in Jakarta, Canada managed to obtain the acceptance of Montreal as the winning city in a competition for the biodiversity commission, a remarkable breakthrough in relation to the acceptance and the reputation of Canada abroad in matters related to the environment.

Time is running out and therefore I am not able to deal with the other items that have been objected to by the member for Laurentides in sustainable development. I can only confirm that from preventing pollution to promoting equity, these are not the monopoly of the provinces. These are not the monopoly of the federal government. These are broad concepts that can be adopted by any level of government for the benefit of the public and for the long term benefit of the population, no matter where people live.

Let me put on record, since our international reputation was criticized earlier, what the OECD said in its report a couple of weeks ago. It praised the environmental assessment process. It praised the environmental analysis of legislation

we carry out from time to time. It praised the round tables on the economy and environment. Last but not least, it praised the proposed commissioner of environment and sustainable development.

This bill has made it as far as Paris and it has received the support of the international community. It cannot be that bad.

(1700 )

If the Bloc Quebecois members want to live with their heads in the sand and ignore the reality of life in the larger world, that is their choice, but it certainly does not project a proactive, open, and intelligent aura.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu):** Is the House ready for the question?

**Some hon. members:** Question.

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

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

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

**Some hon. members:** Yea.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu):** All those opposed will please say nay.

**Some hon. members:** Nay.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu):** In my opinion the yeas have it.

*And more than five members having risen:*

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu):** Call in the members.

*And the bells having rung:*

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu):** Pursuant to Standing Order 45(6), the division on the question now before the House stands deferred until Monday, November 27, at the ordinary hour of daily adjournment, at which time the bells to call in the members will be sounded for not more than 15 minutes.

**Mr. Boudria:** Madam Speaker, on a point of order, I believe you would find unanimous consent to further defer the said vote until Tuesday, November 28, at the conclusion of Government Orders.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu):** Is there unanimous consent?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Mr. Boudria:** Madam Speaker, if you were to seek it I believe you would find unanimous consent to call it 6.30 p.m.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu):** Is there unanimous consent?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

## ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

[English]

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

## EMPLOYMENT

**Ms. Colleen Beaumier (Brampton, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, this government's foreign policy includes the commitment to create jobs for Canadians through international trade.

From time to time the government grants export credits to other countries in order to promote investment in Canada. This is a very aggressive means of creating Canadian jobs through international trade. Such a bold policy must be carefully monitored.

As Edmund Burke once wrote, "It is the nature of all greatness not to be exact, and great trade will always be attended with considerable abuses". It is the role of government to identify and minimize these abuses. My purpose today is to identify one aspect in the administration of Canada's trade policy that has led to the loss of many valuable Canadian jobs.

Through the Government of Canada Canadian taxpayers gave an export credit in the order of \$200 million to Guangdong province during a visit by a delegation to Ottawa in April 1993. In November of 1994 Nortel announced that it had finalized an agreement with Guangdong province to manufacture and install switching equipment in China. The value of the contract was \$200 million. The impact of this agreement was swift and devastating. In March of this year Nortel announced that it was laying off 580 Canadians at its Brampton plant, which brings the total number of jobs lost since 1994 at that plant alone to 1,300. At the same time, Nortel announced it would add 3,000 manufacturing jobs to its plant in Guangdong province over the next three years.

I want to be clear that my quarrel is not with Nortel. Although I am not at all happy that 1,300 jobs have been lost in my riding, I recognize that Nortel's concern is

ultimately the bottom line. Its present circumstance confirms it is reacting to market conditions, as Canadian sales have declined while export sales have increased dramatically.

(1705 )

A recent issue of "Report on Business" described the countless hours Nortel invested in winning this contract. Even the first challenge faced by Nortel was a difficult one.

After signing a memorandum of understanding in December 1992, Chinese officials became upset that Canadian parliamentarians were expressing their concerns about human rights violations by the Chinese government. Chinese officials threatened to walk away from further negotiations. Nortel responded by telling Chinese officials that they were with Nortel U.S., not Nortel Canada. Having distanced themselves from Canadian parliamentarians, Nortel finalized this deal a little less than two years later.

This is a valuable case study for parliamentarians. It clearly demonstrates that export credits must be accompanied by assurances that jobs are created in Canada rather than in low wage economies. The focus of job creation through international trade must remain fixed on Canada. The government must move swiftly to ensure strong Canadian labour content in export assistance programs. A strong first step would be to reverse the recent reduction in the Export Development Corporation's Canadian labour content requirements.

We made a commitment to Canadians that we will promote job creation through international trade. This is a commitment we must keep.

**Mr. Maurizio Bevilacqua (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Human Resources Development, Lib.):** The Canadian telecommunication equipment industry is one of the shining stars in Canada's high technology galaxy. It accounts for 21 per cent of business enterprise research and development undertaken in Canada and is a major employer of university scientific technology graduates. It is a major earner of export revenues. Typically, the small to medium sized enterprises in this business export 90 per cent of their products.

World wide, the industry is dominated by a small number of very large corporations that were established on the basis of serving national or regional markets. With the fundamental changes that are taking place in the provision of communications services world wide, the equipment industry is undergoing massive changes of globalization and restructuring. Canada is fortunate that one of these developing global players is based in Canada and maintains its headquarters and large portions of its research and development and manufacturing here. A consequence of these benefits is constant restructuring.

I am certainly sympathetic with the plight of the workers being displaced by Northern Telecom's decision to transfer manufacturing out of its Bramalea facility and convert it into the corporate world headquarters. I know the important

role these workers played in building the product that was responsible in large part for the modernization of the Canadian telecom infrastructure and for taking Canada's reputation as a source of quality advanced telecom equipment around the world. I wish them the best as they adjust to their new circumstances. I am pleased that much of the work done in Bramalea is staying in Canada and that job growth is continuing in other areas of the industry.

Sustained success in this business for Northern Telecom and for other firms that comprise the Canadian telecom equipment industry is through access to foreign markets. It is important that we in Canada provide a competitive environment from which to supply the world market.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu):** Pursuant to Standing Order 38(5), a motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 5.11 p.m.)

---



**MAIL  POSTE**

Canada Post Corporation/Société canadienne des postes

Postage paid

Port payé

**Lettermail**

**Poste – lettre**

**8801320  
Ottawa**

*If undelivered, return COVER ONLY to:*

Canada Communication Group — Publishing  
45 Sacré–Coeur Boulevard,  
Hull, Québec, Canada, K1A 0S9

*En cas de non – livraison,*

*retourner cette COUVERTURE SEULEMENT à:*  
Groupe Communication Canada — Édition  
45 boulevard Sacré–Coeur,  
Hull, Québec, Canada, K1A 0S9

**Published under the authority of the Speaker of the House of Commons by the Queen’s Printer for Canada.**

**Publié en conformité de l'autorité du Président de la Chambre des communes par l'Imprimeur de la Reine pour le Canada.**

---

**The Speaker of the House hereby grants permission to reproduce this document, in whole or in part, for use in schools and for other purposes such as private study, research, criticism, review or newspaper summary. Any commercial or other use or reproduction of this publication requires the express prior written authorization of the Speaker of the House of Commons.**

**Additional copies may be obtained from the Canada Communication Group — Publishing, Public Works and Government Services Canada, Ottawa, Canada K1A 0S9, at \$1.75 per copy or \$286 per year.**

**Le Président de la Chambre des communes accorde, par la présente, l'autorisation de reproduire la totalité ou une partie de ce document à des fins éducatives et à des fins d'étude privée, de recherche, de critique, de compte rendu ou en vue d'en préparer un résumé de journal. Toute reproduction de ce document à des fins commerciales ou autres nécessite l'obtention au préalable d'une autorisation écrite du Président.**

**On peut obtenir la version française de cette publication en écrivant au Groupe Communication Canada — Édition, Travaux publics et Services gouvernementaux Canada, Ottawa, Canada K1A 0S9, à 1.75 \$ l'exemplaire ou 286 \$ par année.**