



CANADA

# House of Commons Debates

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OFFICIAL REPORT  
(HANSARD)

**Wednesday, October 23, 1996**

**Speaker: The Honourable Gilbert Parent**

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# HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, October 23, 1996

The House met at 2 p.m.

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*Prayers*

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**The Speaker:** As is our practice on Wednesdays, we will now sing O Canada, which will be led by the hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands.

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

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## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

*[English]*

### CONSTABLE PHILIP FRANCIS

**Mr. Janko Perić (Cambridge, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this summer Constable Philip Francis, a member of the Peel Regional Police whose fuel tank had ruptured following a collision with a vehicle on Highway 401 near Milton, Ontario,

On September 21, 1994, Constable Francis, with the help of Mr. Robert Fitzgerald, pulled two people from a burning tractor trailer whose fuel tank had ruptured following a collision with a vehicle on Highway 401 near Milton, Ontario.

As the tires of the rig exploded, Mr. Fitzgerald hoisted Constable Francis on to the cab of the truck. The constable smashed the window and pulled two passengers to safety just moments before the rig was completely in flames.

Through his example, Constable Francis has shown that bravery and concern for others are not outmoded virtues.

On behalf of the people of Cambridge, I congratulate Constable Francis on being awarded the Medal of Bravery.

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*[Translation]*

### QUEBEC'S ECONOMY

**Mr. Maurice Godin (Châteauguay, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, like Saturne Solutions, Quintiles and Ericsson recently announced major investments in Quebec. Highly sought by other provinces, not to mention other countries, these companies chose to invest in

Quebec. This testifies to Quebec's ability to compete at the international level.

But how to explain that, every time a business decides to rationalize its Canadian operations, as CIBA did, Quebec gets the short end of the stick. It is not because Quebec is not competitive, as everyone recognizes its expertise in the pharmaceutical area. There must be other reasons.

We, for our part, feel that federal comments maintain an unhealthy climate for the Quebec economy. These comments, which were probably inspired by the famous plan B, hinder the Quebec government's efforts. Clearly, renewed federalism is not a panacea for Quebec. The time has come to move on to sovereignty.

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*[English]*

### PEACEKEEPING

**Mr. Bob Mills (Red Deer, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, two years ago I brought forward a votable motion to extend the Access to Information Act. Although many Liberal members supported it, they voted against it because they were assured by their party brass that improving access to information was high on the government's agenda and that legislation was just weeks away.

Today, we all know that was not true, so I hope they have learned their lesson: Do not trust the party brass to do in the future what we can do for ourselves today.

Later today we will begin the first hour of debate on a new votable motion on Canadian peacekeeping. Many Liberal members will also want to support this motion because if it is passed, it will give the members the right to speak out and represent our troops when we send a large contingent abroad. Motion No. 31 also gives final approval for large peacekeeping missions to members of Parliament through a free vote.

When the time comes, members should use their votes to make a difference. Help support our troops and empower members of Parliament by supporting Motion No. 31.

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### NEIGHBOURING RIGHTS

**Mrs. Elsie Wayne (Saint John, PC):** Mr. Speaker, Bill C-32, an act to amend the Copyright Act, will have a serious impact on the private radio broadcasting industry if the neighbouring rights

*S. O. 31*

provisions are permitted to proceed. Many people from the radio industry in my riding have told me they are very very worried.

Dr. Arthur Donner conducted an economic impact analysis for the Department of Canadian Heritage. This study clearly showed that higher copyright payments would seriously hurt most and put some radio stations out of business. It also showed that only 2 per cent of neighbouring rights fees would go to new Canadian talent, so why are we doing it?

The U.S. just passed a similar law, however it exempted the radio industry from the neighbouring rights fees. They felt that the value of air play was considered payment in full.

This government continues to renege on its election promise of creating jobs. It continues to eliminate this country's infrastructure of long term jobs. I urge the minister to amend Bill C-32 to exempt all radio from neighbouring rights.

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**SMALL BUSINESS WEEK**

**Mr. Andy Mitchell (Parry Sound—Muskoka, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to salute small business in this country and to recognize Small Business Week.

Today in Canada all but approximately 2,000 of the more than two million businesses fall within the self-employed or small and medium size business categories. Ninety-nine per cent of the new businesses started up in the last decade have been SMEs.

Today in my riding the CFDC, in partnership with the BDC, local chambers and others, is conducting a conference for existing and new entrepreneurs. I applaud this community initiative to help the small business community adapt and take advantage of market opportunities.

On a national level, our federal government is working to help small businesses compete by streamlining regulations, improving access to capital and enhancing export opportunities. Canada is a great place to do business. Today I salute the small business men and women across this country for their entrepreneurial spirit.

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**PERSONS CASE**

**Mrs. Georgette Sheridan (Saskatoon—Humboldt, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, October is Women's History Month. What better time to recall the historic Persons case of October 18, 1929. On that date the British Privy Council overturned the decision of the Canadian Supreme Court which excluded women from public office, pursuant to its interpretation of the British North America Act.

Having decided women were not persons, the court said that women could not be appointed to the Canadian Senate. Dismissing this interpretation as "a relic of days more barbarous than ours" the privy council opted for a more modern view that women were "people too".

If we do not remember our history, we shall be condemned to repeat it. In the telling of this tale we can be encouraged by the increased numbers of female parliamentarians, over 50 MPs and more than 20 senators. While it is an improvement over 1929, the lesson of the Persons case is that we can do better.

I look forward to a time when the proportion of female representation in government is a true reflection of the general population and like the privy council, we can look back on today's modest numbers as a relic of days gone by.

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[Translation]

**THE MONTREAL CENTRE D'ENTREPRISES ET D'INNOVATION**

**Mr. Bernard Patry (Pierrefonds—Dollard, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to inform the members of this House of an excellent initiative taken by our government in the Montreal area.

On October 11, the Secretary of State responsible for the Federal Office of Regional Development—Quebec announced a \$500,000 federal subsidy to the Centre d'entreprise et d'innovation de Montréal or CEIM, to set up a new program aimed at helping small businesses at the start-up or expansion stage carve out a solid position for themselves in the year 2000 economy.

The CEIM will provide training services to 15 new businesses in the high-tech health care industries, thus helping to create over 200 jobs in areas that are vital to our prosperity.

• (1405)

This support for the CEIM shows that our government is still a partner of Quebec's small business sector. It also demonstrates the major role we intend to play in the development of the greater Montreal area so it may remain an economic, technological and cultural powerhouse essential to the future of both Quebec and the rest of Canada.

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**CHILD POVERTY**

**Mrs. Christiane Gagnon (Québec, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, a study conducted by the Bread for the World Institute shows that Canada has the second highest percentage of children living below the poverty line after the United States.

According to this study, 14 per cent of children in Canada live in poverty, compared to only 3 per cent in Finland, Norway, Denmark and Switzerland, and 7 per cent in Germany and France.

In spite of these disturbing statistics, the Canada Information Office continues to distribute fact sheets stating that Canada is the best country in the world. This is chloroform for steadfast Canadian nationalists.

Canada is a country where the gap between the rich and the poor is widening and child poverty is growing. There is no valid reason for the child poverty rate to be higher in Canada than in European countries.

The government must act on its 1989 commitment and eliminate child poverty by the year 2000, otherwise too high a price will have to be paid and the human deficit will be out of control.

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[English]

#### REFORM BUDGET PLATFORM

**Mr. Herb Grubel (Capilano—Howe Sound, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance often talks nonsense about the Reform budget platform. For him and the media, here are the facts made simple.

Spending cuts of \$15 billion plus \$24 billion in revenue increases in four years will produce a surplus of \$39 billion. This money will be used to eliminate the deficit of \$14 billion, provide tax relief of \$15 billion, raise spending on medicare and education by \$4 billion and pay down the debt by \$9 billion.

This spending program uses exactly \$39 billion in the revenue surplus. Our fiscal program does not produce deficits. We first balance the budget and then use only money in the bank to finance tax cuts and spending increases. The debt reduction money is our contingency reserve. Simple, eh?

\* \* \*

[Translation]

#### SMALL AND MEDIUM SIZE BUSINESS WEEK

**Mrs. Eleni Bakopanos (Saint-Denis, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the week of October 21 to 25 is Small Business Week. Small and medium size business is the driving force behind the Canadian economy. It is also the driving force behind job creation. That is why our government is committed to supporting the small business sector to ensure its growth.

In Quebec, the Federal Office of Regional Development speaks for the federal government to small business. Through a network of 13 regional offices across Quebec, it works in partnership with Quebec entrepreneurs.

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[English]

Small and medium size businesses, often run by families or young entrepreneurs, are the key job creators in Canada, particularly in my riding of Saint-Denis. There are also those who seek markets outside this country and the federal development office of Quebec provides them with the expertise to help enter those markets.

I salute all the people in the small and medium size businesses in Saint-Denis and throughout Canada for their contributions to Canada's economic development in this week dedicated to them.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

#### REVENUE CANADA

**Mr. Mark Assad (Gatineau—La Lièvre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Revenue Canada strives to offer its services directly to small businesses, provided they have modest means.

The main services already in place include the electronic filing system, the payment of the GST and the transfer of funds.

Eventually, customs processing will be made possible through the use of Internet and the implementation of an electronic system as simple as the sending of a fax, as well as the release and reporting of goods, and the payment of duties and taxes, without having to go to the customs office.

Canadians want less paper but more services. This is what Revenue Canada is in the process of achieving.

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#### MONTREAL'S ECONOMY

**Mr. Denis Paradis (Brome—Missisquoi, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, socio-economic stakeholders, Montrealers and Quebecers in general were very optimistic and pleased following the speech delivered yesterday by the Prime Minister to the Chamber of Commerce of Metropolitan Montreal.

The participants greatly appreciated the call for Canadian solidarity by the Prime Minister, to help put Montreal back on its feet and get ready for the next century.

• (1410)

They were also pleased to see the Canadian Prime Minister hold out his hand to Lucien Bouchard and invite him to co-operate to find a solution to the real problems experienced by real people.

The threat of another referendum on separation remains the last major obstacle to Montreal's economic recovery. Let us hope the PQ government leader will soon remove this threat, which hinders

*S. O. 31*

Montreal's economic development. We need political and economic certainty.

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#### THE MEMBER FOR VAUDREUIL

**Mr. Bernard St-Laurent (Manicouagan, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, since the House resumed this fall, the Liberal members from Quebec are using the period for statements by members to launch petty attacks on the Quebec government and all sovereignists.

Yesterday, the member for Vaudreuil took this anti-Quebec offensive one step further. The Liberal member attacked an article in Montreal's *La Presse*.

The article, which appeared in the arts and theatre section, dealt with a film about the referendum and noted that, in it, the federalist option was essentially defended by anglophones and new Canadians. This brief comment in a review of an NFB film was not to his liking.

We know all about these Liberals, who for years have been trying to control the CBC. Now they want to control all print media, silence the sovereignist opposition and turn our media into branch offices of the federal Liberal *Pravda*. How sad and how cynical.

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[English]

#### PERSONS CASE

**Mrs. Daphne Jennings (Mission—Coquitlam, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today because I believe in the strength, the capability and the equality of women.

This week is the anniversary of the pivotal Persons case where Canadian women against all odds finally won the basic right of equality: the recognition of women as persons in law and the equal right to vote.

I feel it is most fitting for me to encourage women of today to honour the memory of Nellie McClung and her compatriots by embracing our freedom and exercising our equality by denouncing special status. Special status is divisive. It is the very issue that Nellie McClung fought against.

Today we can honour those women whose struggle was against true inequality and who gave us all the ability to participate equally. We can recognize that they would not have sought further protectionism in the guise of affirmative action.

Our charter of rights and freedoms clearly states that we are all equal before the law and I believe that would have been enough for Nellie McClung.

I thank the women of the Persons case for their legacy. I am proud to say again, women are persons and equal today, without distinction.

[Translation]

#### THE LEADER OF THE BLOC QUEBECOIS

**Mr. Robert Bertrand (Pontiac—Gatineau—Labelle, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as was to be expected, the leader of the Bloc Quebecois was quick to trot out his old separatist arguments in reaction to the speech delivered yesterday by our Prime Minister in Montreal.

The Bloc Quebecois has painted itself into such a tight ideological corner that it is losing sight of what is important, as was again brought home to us yesterday by the comments of its leader. Montreal, first and foremost, and Quebec as a whole are being crushed under the weight of the separatist threat. We all have a huge uphill battle ahead of us to put Montreal and Quebec back on the road to prosperity.

It is certainly not by blaming others for the political instability of Quebec that the leader of the Bloc Quebecois will help Lucien Bouchard, on the eve of the socio-economic summit, to convince his partners that sovereignists are acting in good faith.

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[English]

#### THE ENVIRONMENT

**Mr. John Maloney (Erie, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this government is committed to environmental health and protection and knows that the most efficient way to ensure environmental health is through pollution prevention.

Canadians are no longer willing to accept inaction on the part of government when there is potential for more damage to the environment or their health could be affected.

Transportation, including the automobile, is the single leading source of air pollution in Canada and it is the automobile industry itself that has told us that the fuel additive MMT compromises the efficiency of the newest emissions control technologies. That is why this government is moving to ban MMT.

Clean air is a priority for the government. In banning MMT we are moving quickly to restore the Canadian birthright to breathe clean and healthy air.

Some voices oppose the MMT bill, but doing the right thing is not always popular. Some people do not like the fact that this government is not afraid to make the hard decisions.

But then there is the voice of the Canadian people who know what it takes to protect their health and environment. They want their governments to be leaders on health and environmental issues. This government demonstrates yet again its full commitment to health and environmental protection.

*Oral Questions*

• (1415)

**TAX HARMONIZATION**

**Mr. Nelson Riis (Kamloops, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the Liberals in Prince Edward Island have called an election and remain the only Liberal government in the Atlantic provinces not to sign into the GST/PST harmonization scam.

The P.E.I. Liberals know that the people of P.E.I. oppose harmonization. The people of Prince Edward Island know that a harmonized tax will actually cost them more since all sorts of goods and services presently exempt from the PST will now be fully taxed under harmonization. They also know it will cause confusion for businesses that operate in different provinces since there will exist one consumption tax in Nova Scotia and a different tax in most other provinces.

Also, the people of Prince Edward Island remember the Prime Minister's quote in the *Globe and Mail* when he said: "I am opposed to the GST. I have always been opposed to it and I will always be opposed to it in the future. It is a tax that is both regressive and discriminatory".

Based on this quote, maybe the people of Prince Edward Island should not trust the Liberals' promise not to impose a harmonized GST/PST.

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**ORAL QUESTION PERIOD**

[Translation]

**MONTREAL'S ECONOMY**

**Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Prime Minister went to Montreal to tell business people that he wanted to work together with the Quebec government and local stakeholders to deal with the real problems of real people, as he put it.

For many years, federal initiatives have had a crushing impact on Montreal's economy. To mention a few: the Borden line, which killed the petrochemical industry in Montreal; decisions in the air transportation sector, which, following the opening of Mirabel, compromised the viability of this airport; federal procurement policies, which penalized Quebec and Montreal; the way federal spending on research and development is directed, which penalizes Montreal's economy. These are all decisions that over the years have undermined Montreal's economy.

If the Prime Minister means what he says about wanting to help Montreal's economy, why does he not review his government's decision to put a stop to federal participation in the Tokamak project in Varennes, which provides the greater Montreal area with

quality jobs in the high tech sector? That is a big help to the economy.

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the government was forced to make cutbacks in this area, and we had to—

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

**Mr. Chrétien:** Yes, cutbacks were made in Quebec, in Ontario and all Canadian provinces. It was felt this particular program was not a priority at this time. Other cuts in the same sector have affected similar scientific projects elsewhere in Canada.

We would probably have preferred to keep it, but the Minister of Natural Resources indicated many times here in the House that she could no longer keep this program because there were other priorities.

**Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, when the Prime Minister goes to Montreal, speaking to all Quebecers, says he is willing to give Montreal's economy a boost. People suggest certain projects that will help Montreal's economy, improve the job situation and provide for a better future, but he says no. He refuses to invest \$7.5 million in these projects.

I will give him a second chance to show his good faith regarding Montreal. We know that Atomic Energy of Canada is a Crown corporation that refers its important decisions to the minister responsible.

Why did the government approve the transfer of the office of AECL to Toronto, which may eventually deprive Montreal of high tech companies in this sector, another area where the Prime Minister could help Montreal if he were so disposed?

[English]

**Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, let me point out to the hon. Leader of the Opposition that in fact the crown corporation AECL has not closed its office in the city of Montreal. In fact, it retains an office in that city. I remind the hon. Leader of the Opposition that it is because of AECL and the sale of Candu reactors that there is a nuclear industry, a private sector industry, that employs thousands of people in the Montreal area.

• (1420)

[Translation]

**Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Prime Minister had nothing to tell the people of Montreal. Today, he has nothing to say to the official opposition. I will give him a third chance.

In recent years, the Liberal Party of Canada was fiercely opposed to Bills C-22 and Bill C-91, which encouraged the development of pharmaceutical industries in Montreal, a sector that is in good shape. I may recall that the entire Liberal Party voted against Bill C-91, except perhaps for the Minister of Finance, who was absent

*Oral Questions*

at the time. Under constant pressure from the Ontario caucus, the government recently wanted to review the regulations of Bill C-91.

If the Prime Minister really wants to help Montreal develop its economy, will he promise today that he will not in any way change Bill C-91, which his party voted against but which is a godsend to the pharmaceutical industry in Montreal?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in a few seconds the Leader of the Reform Party will rise to accuse me of investing too much in Montreal on Monday, by helping Bombardier develop a new 70 seat aircraft to take advantage of an increasingly accessible market. We have been helping this company for a very long time. It is now the sixth largest aircraft manufacturer in the world and very soon will rank fourth. The company received \$85 million on Monday. We have to choose our priorities, and that is the one we chose.

As for the pharmaceutical industry, the legislation is in effect. There will be a review at some time, as required by law. We will have to see whether the pharmaceutical industry is fulfilling its obligations to engage in research and development and to locate facilities in Canada, and if it is, the legislation will be maintained. The industry has made certain commitments which I hope it has met. When the House of Commons reviews this question, a decision can be made. It is true that in the past three years there has been pressure to amend the legislation, but we have not done so. The leader of the opposition does not seem to be aware of that fact.

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**SECURITIES**

**Mr. Yvan Loubier (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, while he cries over Montreal's fate, what the Prime Minister wants in fact is to deprive Montreal of a financial and economic decision making centre. There was the S-31 attempt to rein in the Caisse de dépôt et de placement du Québec. The Prime Minister must remember, as he was a minister at the time and took part in the decision to crush the Caisse de dépôt et de placement. More recently, there was Montreal's proposed international banking centre, which was also torpedoed by the federal government. The government now wants to create a Canada-wide securities commission in Toronto rather than Montreal.

How can the Prime Minister reconcile yesterday's fine promises to help Montreal with his plan to create a securities commission in Toronto, when we know full well that this would further weaken Montreal?

**Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, first of all, the decision to designate Montreal and Vancouver as international banking centres has yet to be made. Second, in his speech yesterday, the Prime Minister listed a whole series of measures the federal government has adopted to help Montreal and Quebec, of which the announcement about Bombardier is but one

example. In the private sector, the pharmaceutical and aeronautical industries do more research and development in Quebec than elsewhere because of the federal government's support for R and D.

• (1425)

As far as the securities commission is concerned, the federal government's position is very clear: if the other provinces want to, we are ready to co-operate with them. It is up to them. In fact, all those who favour this option do so because they want to protect Quebec's financial industry, because they are very much aware that Montreal is not in competition with Toronto, but with New York, London and Frankfurt. That is what we will protect.

**Mr. Yvan Loubier (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, it is arguments like those raised by the minister, which border on recklessness, that have crippled Montreal's economy and continue to do so.

We have no answer regarding the pharmaceutical projects, as the Minister of Finance was hiding behind the curtains when this matter was raised. Again today when we asked about the securities commission, we received no answer from the Prime Minister or even the Minister of Finance.

I put the question again to the Prime Minister. Will he promise in this House to mind his own business and not put in place a Canada-wide securities commission that will further weaken Montreal?

**Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is asking us to oppose the will of other provinces that want to protect Canada's financial industry. They are telling all the industries in Quebec that want to issue shares in Canada they will not be able to do so in the future because everything will be moved to New York.

They are saying that the people of Montreal and Quebec cannot compete with other countries, and I say to you that I am a proud Montrealer, that I am not afraid of anyone, that it is the hon. member who is afraid and he should admit it.

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[English]

**THE ECONOMY**

**Mr. Preston Manning (Calgary Southwest, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, the government claims to be interested in helping the 1.4 million jobless Canadians yet it refuses to set targets for reducing that number.

The government professes to be concerned about the overburdened Canadian taxpayer and yet it refuses to set targets for tax relief. The best way to create jobs in this country is to balance the budget and to lower taxes.



*Oral Questions*

The finance minister says he is interested in setting measurable targets. What are the minister's targets for providing tax relief to overtaxed Canadians?

**Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as far as we are concerned, our record can speak for itself. In not one instance have we increased personal income taxes, having succeeded a government that had increased them 39 times.

In each of our budgets we have brought in selective tax cuts designed to help the poor, to help the disadvantaged, to help research and development and to help in the creation of jobs. If what the hon. member is saying is will we accept his thesis, his philosophy, that the kind of tax cuts that ought to be brought in are those tax cuts that will help the rich while gutting the programs and the poor, then we say no.

**Mr. Preston Manning (Calgary Southwest, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, the finance minister says that he opposes Reform's tax relief proposals. In other words, therefore, the minister is against giving single mothers earning \$20,000 a year a 95 per cent tax cut as we propose.

The minister has just said he is against giving tax credits to stay at home parents. The minister says he rejects the changes in personal and spousal exemptions that Reform proposes, proposals that will directly benefit over 13 million Canadians and two million taxpayers respectively.

Why is the Liberal government so opposed to giving single mothers, families and over 13 million Canadians tax relief as Reform proposes?

• (1430)

**Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we are not against providing single mothers with help. If the Reform Party will look at the last budget it will see that we increased substantially the working income supplement for families with four children.

If it will take a look at what we have done in the case of education credits, if it will take a look at a whole series of measures which we have brought in, every single one is designed to help the poor, to help single mothers. The Reform Party voted against every single one of these.

I will tell the House what we are against. The hon. member talks about helping single mothers. We are against gutting welfare programs because that is what single mothers depend on and that is what Reform has used to pay for its tax cuts for the rich.

**Mr. Preston Manning (Calgary Southwest, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, if the finance minister is against cutting welfare budgets, why has he cut \$7 billion out of federal transfers to the provinces?

Reform's tax relief proposal will help all taxpayers but it will help low income Canadians and Canadian families the most.

Thirteen and a half million Canadians will benefit from Reform's plan. Over one million middle to low income Canadians will pay no tax under Reform's plan. That is \$2,000 in tax relief per family by the year 2000 under Reform's plan compared to the \$3,000 income deduction that families experience under the Liberals.

Will the government set some firm targets for tax relief or are the Liberals satisfied with the crippling tax burden facing Canadian workers, families and employers?

**Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in our first budget we provided tax relief for Canadians. In our second budget we provided tax relief for Canadians and we will continue to do so.

The reductions in transfers to the provinces were less than 3 per cent of their revenues and they were substantially less than the reductions in transfers that were recommended by the Reform Party. The Reform Party essentially said it would gut those transfers. What we have done is a lot less.

Let us deal for a minute with this question of families. The Reform Party stands up and says it wants to protect the Canadian family. In those provinces where the Reform Party will gut equalization are there not Canadian families who depend on the public services that would be provided? Do Canadian families not depend on maternity, sickness benefits and unemployment insurance?

The Reform Party would eviscerate welfare payments. In the weird, narrow definition of the Reform Party, are there not Canadian families on welfare who require help? Is its vision of this country so narrow that it cannot understand the needs of ordinary Canadians?

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**MONTREAL'S ECONOMY**

**Mr. Réal Ménard (Hochelaga—Maisonneuve, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister, and I do hope he will answer himself.

The Prime Minister was in Montreal yesterday, where he shed crocodile tears over the sad state of the Montreal economy. Yet, the federal government's procurement policy clearly puts Quebec at a disadvantage. The value of federal goods and services not purchased in Quebec amounts to amounts to \$1.2 billion, which represents a loss of \$600 million to \$700 million for the Montreal area, I repeat a loss of \$600 million to \$700 million.

Instead of crying over Montreal's economy, will the Prime Minister act positively and constructively, and restore fairness in federal procurement, which would create thousands of jobs in the greater Montreal area? Will the Prime Minister take action?

*Oral Questions*

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in our system, government procurement is through public tenders. Each province, in fact, each citizen may submit a bid.

• (1435)

Some things are bought in one part of Canada and others in other parts, and all the provinces are treated equitably. If the hon. members are suggesting that we should stop using this system and award contracts only to those we like, that would not be honest government. It would amount to systematic favouritism.

One of the actions we have taken was to set specific rules providing a level playing field for everyone. If they really did respect the wishes of Quebecers, who, twice already, have said they want to remain in Canada, they would stop talking about referendums. Businesses would then not be leaving but moving to Montreal.

**Mr. Réal Ménard (Hochelaga—Maisonneuve, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the referendum is an issue they raise when they have nothing else to talk about. I have a specific proposal for the Prime Minister.

Why does the Prime Minister not agree to making federal procurement in Quebec proportionate to the size of its population? For Montreal alone, this would represent a \$500 million increase, which, in turn, would create 10,000 new jobs in the greater Montreal area. Why did the Prime Minister not make this commitment yesterday? Is the Prime Minister serious about Montreal?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, will the hon. member rise in this House and tell the public that, under the equalization payment system through which the Canadian government provides assistance to any region of Canada experiencing financial difficulties—and they say they appreciate it—last year, because its revenue was below a certain level, Quebec actually received an extra \$500 million from the federal government?

Will the hon. member rise in this House and admit that our good policies have resulted in lower interest rates over the past 18 months and that the Quebec government actually saved \$625 million because there is a good, responsible government in Ottawa?

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[English]

**GOODS AND SERVICES TAX**

**Mr. Monte Solberg (Medicine Hat, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, how sad that the finance minister's vision for single mothers on welfare does not extend to granting them jobs down the road. That is what they really want.

The GST saga continues. The Liberals promised taxpayers they would axe, scrap and abolish it—the Liberal equivalent of “I’ll

respect you in the morning”—then they covered that whopper up with a billion dollar pay-off that doubled the tax in Atlantic Canada, followed by the Deputy Prime Minister's resignation. Then they broke their promise to end the GST on reading and now, just like the Tories used to do, they have cooked the books to bury the billion dollar pay-off and fudged their deficit figures.

Since we have known for a long time that their word is not any good—

**The Speaker:** I ask the hon. member to put his question now.

**Mr. Solberg:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can the finance minister tell Canadians why he is now prepared to sacrifice the fiscal credibility of the country in order to pull another fast one on the voters?

**Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, let us be very clear. Despite the obvious problems of the hon. member for Medicine Hat, the auditor general has expressed a clear, unambiguous approval of the government's books. There are no reservations. He has given us a clean opinion.

As a matter of fact we have never had a reservation on the books since we have taken office. The auditor general said that the government had acted in a way that was even more prudent than he would—I was about to use the word conservative, but I caught myself.

When we took office we found that the previous government had made a series of commitments that were not consolidated in the books. As a result the books did not provide a proper statement of the government's financial condition. We have made sure that any liability is recognized at the time it is incurred. That is proper accounting. That is what we have done.

• (1440)

**Mr. Monte Solberg (Medicine Hat, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I think the finance minister's chin is growing.

The government just put hundreds of new tax auditors on the payroll to ferret out these same types of scams in the small business sector. If the finance minister did these things in a private sector company he would be in jail.

Will the finance minister commit today to stop the creative bookkeeping and meet the same standard that he expects small business people to meet when his auditors come knocking on their doors?

**Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, if we had done in the private sector—

**An hon. member:** Accounting 101.

**Mr. Martin (LaSalle—Émard):** Exactly. Accounting 101.

If we had done in the private sector what we did here it would be called accrual accounting, which is what most businesses happen to use.

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The hon. minister has promised to give the member a lesson in accounting 101 anytime he would like to have it.

What we have done is recognize the liability at the time it was incurred. If what the hon. member wants to do is accuse the government of in fact having done better on the deficit this year than we announced, that is a lot better than what the previous government was accused of, which was to always understate the deficit.

The fact is we probably have the cleanest books of almost any government around.

\* \* \*

[*Translation*]

**MONTREAL'S ECONOMY**

**Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, there was a lot of wishful thinking on the Prime Minister's part yesterday, in Montreal. The Prime Minister also shed tears over the plight of the city.

However, we looked at the Liberal agenda, which will be—

**The Speaker:** I would ask you to not use props.

**Mr. Duceppe:** You are right Mr. Speaker, I should not have shown this, it is awful.

I looked at the list of resolutions for the Liberal Party congress, which will form the basis of their platform. I found 20 priority resolutions relating to the economy, however, not one of them had to do with Montreal. The only thing about Montreal was a very short reference in the eighth paragraph of one of these 20 resolutions, a "whereas" clause. There will not be much room for Montreal on the Liberal agenda.

I therefore ask the Prime Minister: how can he tell Quebecers that he is prepared to take the first steps, that he is shedding tears over the plight of Montreal, that he wants to do something for Montreal, when nothing will be said about Montreal during the Liberal congress?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I guess my visit to Montreal did not go unnoticed. I guess the announcements we made regarding Canadair did not go unnoticed in Montreal. The other initiatives we are taking in the Montreal region must be effective, given that the Bloc Québécois is so upset today.

Let me say one thing: we implement programs in every region of the country. We know, and I acknowledged it before, that, because of the current problems in Quebec, where everyday the provincial government says it will soon hold a referendum, businesses are leaving the province because these irresponsible people will not recognize that, twice, Quebecers have opted to remain in Canada, since it is in their best interests.

**Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, for once the Prime Minister used the right word, which is a rare occurrence. He said his visit did not go unnoticed. He is right. His visit was not remarkable, it merely did not go unnoticed.

The Prime Minister talks about uncertainty. But who is generating uncertainty in Quebec when the Prime Minister of Canada challenges democratic rules when he threatens to partition Quebec, when he goes so far as to have his picture with Howard Galganov in one of his members' pamphlets? Who is generating uncertainty? Who has an interest in generating uncertainty, if not the person who has made a career of denigrating Quebec?

I ask the Prime Minister: How can he reconcile the speech he delivered yesterday in Montreal with the fact that all his actions relate to plan B, a plan which even Daniel Johnson repudiates?

• (1445)

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have spent 33 years in public life and I learned a long time ago that insult is the weapon of the weak, the weapon of those who have no arguments.

I have been in this House for over 30 years and I was elected for 28 years in a riding that is 98 per cent francophone. I have always protected the interests of my constituents based on my conscience, and they have always renewed my term of office.

I have also always respected democracy, but I know these people do not want to respect democracy. They do not want to accept defeat. They do not want to admit that Quebecers want to remain Canadians, and this is why Montreal is currently in trouble. People are leaving Montreal because of the political uncertainty. But we say it is possible to be proud Quebecers and to be proud Canadians at the same time.

\* \* \*

[*English*]

**THE ECONOMY**

**Mr. John Williams (St. Albert, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, the auditor general pointed out yesterday that the Minister of Finance has fudged the public accounts to the tune of \$1 billion and once again the Liberal government has violated its own code of ethics, the accounting code of ethics, its own rules by fudging the deficit numbers not just this year, but next year and the year after. We will see the Minister of Finance take credit for it.

He may want to give 101 accounting courses but he needs 101 ethics courses.

Is the minister cooking the books?

**The Speaker:** I would ask the hon. member to be very judicious in his comments. I would ask him now to please pose his question.

**Mr. Williams:** Mr. Speaker, is the Minister of Finance fixing the books this year to give himself a billion dollar cushion next year

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because of his high tax, high unemployment, interest free loans to Liberal contributors coming off the rails sooner than we think?

**Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, there are implications coming from members of the Reform Party that the auditor general did not express a completely clean opinion as to the books of the government. I repeat that the auditor general did. And the hon. member ought to have at least the decency to recognize this.

In terms of when a liability should be recognized, it is a generally accepted accounting principle, generally accepted in international commerce as well as domestic commerce, that a liability should be recognized when it is incurred. The liability was incurred in the year in which it was booked.

What the auditor general has said was that all the details of the agreement had not been fully worked out. If the hon. member would like to hang round the House for about 15 minutes at the end of question period, that particular question will be answered for him.

**Mr. John Williams (St. Albert, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I think that was a pretty long and technical answer. It added up to fuddle-duddle. The point is the auditor general pointed out that he is breaking his own rules and accounting rules and everybody else's rules to accomplish what he has set out to.

Why does politics become more important than truth in accounting, honesty in reporting and responsible management of Canadian finances?

**Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am sorry if my answer was a little too technical. Perhaps one of his colleagues might explain it to him.

Let it be very clear that at the time we took office there were a lot of doubts expressed as to the credibility of the government's financial projections.

• (1450)

It was very clear to us that if we were going to re-establish confidence in the management of the economy by the new government, it was important that we recognize liabilities when they occurred, that we be as prudent as possible and that we go the extra mile to do so.

That is what happened in this case. It may well be that the auditor general has said we have been excessively prudent but I can tell members that is not a bad accusation to carry in the international money markets.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**THE DEFICIT**

**Mr. Richard Bélisle (La Prairie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance.

Yesterday, in the *Public Accounts of Canada* the auditor general accused the government of breaking its own accounting rules to distort its deficit. Yet the Liberals were the first to cry foul when the former Conservative government pulled a similar stunt.

Will the Minister of Finance finally admit that he has deliberately inflated the 1995-96 deficit by close to one billion dollars so as to purposely reduce the real deficit for 1996-97 by a corresponding amount?

**Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as I have just said, the auditor general has given a very clear opinion on the government's financial statements. What he said was that because the agreement in principle, not the detailed agreement, had been signed, the amount should have been included in another year, but we wanted to be more cautious, because it is very important to establish the federal government's credibility on international markets. That is what we have done.

I repeat, the auditor general has given a very clear opinion about the federal government's books.

**Mr. Richard Bélisle (La Prairie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, on a supplementary, will the Minister of Finance admit that he is actually cooking the books, purely with an election in mind, in order to mislead the public about the federal deficit?

**The Speaker:** The question is not in order.

\* \* \*

[English]

**EXPORTS**

**Mr. Bill Graham (Rosedale, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister for International Trade.

[Translation]

When I have a second, I will be able to ask my question.

[English]

The government strategy is to increase exports and double them by the year 2000. Could the minister please inform the House how he intends to meet this target, and how the government will achieve its jobs and growth strategy by the beginning of the next century?

**Hon. Arthur C. Eggleton (Minister for International Trade, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, coming off a record year of export increases, I am pleased to inform members of the House that in the latest statistics for the month of August we reached an all time record of \$23.3 billion. That is an export level that we reached for the first time. Furthermore, we reached a trade surplus in that same month of again a record of some \$4 billion.

For the first time in a dozen years we turned the corner in terms of the current account surplus. We are getting new trading companies involved in this trading operation, particularly small and

medium size businesses because that is where we are creating the jobs.

For every billion dollars of new exports, 11,000 jobs are sustained in this country. We are becoming more proactive. We are retooling, re-engineering our services so that the small and medium size enterprises continue to grow, continue to provide for record export levels.

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### BOMBARDIER

**Mr. Randy White (Fraser Valley West, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister.

Yesterday in this House I asked the government to explain the connection between Bombardier's receiving huge government handouts and the fact that it contributed \$170,000 to the Liberal Party over the last three years. I got no answer.

Section 121.(2) of the Criminal Code specifically outlines the rules against government kickbacks.

My question for the Prime Minister is would he explain—

• (1455)

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

**The Speaker:** I have a difficult time in that I allow quite a huge preamble, but I never know where some members are going when they ask their questions. It seems to me that there is an insinuation here.

I would ask the hon. member to please withdraw his last words about kickbacks.

**Mr. White (Fraser Valley West):** Mr. Speaker, I will withdraw that comment.

**The Speaker:** I thank the hon. member for that and I ask the hon. member to put his question now.

**Mr. White (Fraser Valley West):** Mr. Speaker, would the Prime Minister explain the difference between the spirit of section 121.(2) of the Criminal Code and the ongoing relationship between Bombardier and the Liberal government?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, nobody pays much attention to the type of completely distorted statement by the member, but we cannot expect much more from him.

The reality is that we have a law in Canada on electoral expenses and contribution and it is all public. I have a list of corporations that have given to the Reform Party, and I do not call those kickbacks. They are people who are contributing.

What we did yesterday or the day before with Canadair was to help a company that is becoming extremely competitive in the

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world today. It is sixth in the world as a builder of planes and it will be fourth soon.

I want to tell people that the company is very successful. It contributes to my party. It may contribute to other parties. It is all public. All contributions are public.

It is completely unacceptable to accuse us of providing a loan, which is to be repaid, to a successful Canadian company because it has given a contribution to the Liberal Party. But we know the level at which this member of Parliament loves to operate.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

### THE CANADIAN ARMED FORCES

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

Yesterday, the minister asked about our policy on disclosing severance settlements. I remind you that our policy is the same as the Quebec government's, which is based on Quebec jurisprudence and puts severance pay in the same category as regular compensation, which is in the public domain.

If the minister is willing to be open, I am giving him another chance and asking him again to confirm that General Boyle received over half a million dollars in severance pay, and whether or not he intends to make this agreement public?

**Hon. Douglas Young (Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as I told him yesterday, I hope my hon. colleague understands that the rules are the same for everyone. Not only for General Boyle, but for every public servant, every member of the military, or anyone else working for the Government of Canada.

The settlements reached with General Boyle are within the rules established by Treasury Board. If the hon. member wants to find out more, he knows what he must do, because we in Canada have laws on the protection of personal information, which, I hope, will be respected in both Canada and Quebec.

\* \* \*

[English]

### JUSTICE

**Mr. Jack Ramsay (Crowfoot, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, Bill C-42 will confer upon Chief Justice Lamer and his wife Madame Justice Tremblay-Lamer a pension benefit that does not exist under the current Judges Act. This has raised a concern that a perception has been created that the impartiality of the chief justice may have been compromised.

• (1500)

University Professor Ted Morton has stated:

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Without imputing any illicit motive to anyone involved—the timing of this proposed change could not be worse. Sceptics will claim it is unacceptable that a chief justice who is about to benefit from the justice minister's proposed pension policy change now sits in judgment on the justice minister's Quebec reference—the most politically sensitive constitutional case of the decade.

Did the justice minister anticipate that his proposed pension reform could undermine the perception of impartiality of the chief justice and, if not, would he care to comment on Professor Morton's concern?

**Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I should first caution the hon. member that he is speaking about the office of the chief justice of Canada, the highest office in our legal system in this country.

I caution the hon. member that he is speaking about a person who occupies that office, the Right Hon. Antonio Lamer, who for over 30 years as a judge has demonstrated an unimpeachable character and integrity. I caution the hon. member to approach this issue with those factors in mind.

By raising this issue in this way, this hon. member has demonstrated more than anything else his own lack of judgment and his own regrettable approach in the business of politics.

This bill, as the hon. member well knows, is a technical amendment identified years ago, indeed before there were even any spouses on the bench. It was brought forward in Bill C-42 at the first appropriate time.

**An hon. member:** This is not an appropriate time.

**Mr. Rock:** It deals not just with the chief justice and his spouse. There are other judges on benches in Canada who are married to each other.

**An hon. member:** Who? Name one.

**Mr. Rock:** It does nothing more than bring judges' pensions into line with all the other public service pensions, including members of Parliament's pensions.

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

**Mr. Rock:** I suggest that the hon. member should do his homework, learn the facts and not come to this House with suggestions that call into question the integrity of the chief justice of this country.

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### BIOSPHERE RESERVE

**Mr. Svend J. Robinson (Burnaby—Kingsway, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of the Environment.

The minister is aware that there is strong support from the government of B.C., the Nuuchahnulth First Nations and other key stakeholders for the establishment of a United Nations interna-

tional biosphere reserve in Clayoquot Sound on the west coast of Vancouver Island.

Will the minister tell the House and Canadians whether the Government of Canada supports the designation of Clayoquot Sound as a biosphere reserve and, if so, whether the government will contribute a fair and equitable share to help make this a reality?

**Hon. Sergio Marchi (Minister of the Environment, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, let me thank the hon. member for his question and his concern. It is an issue that obviously touches a very passionate chord in British Columbia and indeed with all Canadians.

The government is currently looking at this. I know my colleague the minister of heritage, myself and others in government, together with the ambassador for the environment, a proud resident of British Columbia, the Hon. John Fraser, are working hand in glove.

We hope at a very early juncture to bring a very successful conclusion to this very real issue.

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### FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION

**Mr. Murray Calder (Wellington—Grey—Dufferin—Simcoe, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food.

According to the United Nations Agriculture and Food Organization, there are 800 million hungry people in developing countries. Next week at the world food summit what is Canada going to do to help the world's hungry?

**Hon. Ralph E. Goodale (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Canada takes the world food summit to be held in Rome in November very seriously for a number of reasons.

Canada played a pivotal role in the founding of the FAO in 1945. We hosted the 50th anniversary ceremonies of the FAO in Quebec City in 1995 where the foundation for this summit was laid. It is also worth noting that Canada is one of the world's most productive nations in food and food products so we have a particular responsibility as we head to the Rome summit in November.

We will be emphasizing the principles of peace, democracy and human rights in our presentation.

• (1505)

We will be talking about the proper functioning of the world trading system so that it will be reliable from both the point of view of exporters and importers. We will be talking about the contributions to be made to productivity and sustainability by organizations like the PFRA and CIDA and private organizations like the UPA. We will also want to talk with both exporters and importers about

how we can all work better together on security of supply in the world and a vastly improved distribution system.

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### PRESENCE IN THE GALLERY

**The Speaker:** I would like to draw the attention of members to the presence in the gallery of Dr. Michael Ausserwinkler, Deputy Governor of the Province of Carinthia of Austria.

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

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## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[*English*]

### GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

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

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[*Translation*]

### WAYS AND MEANS

#### TABLING OF NOTICE OF MOTION

**Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to the provisions of Standing Order 83(1), I have the honour to lay upon the table a notice of ways and means motion to amend the Excise Tax Act as well as explanatory notes. I ask that an order of the day be designated for consideration of the motion.

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[*English*]

### TAXATION

**Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to announce that the Government of Canada has reached detailed agreements with the Governments of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador to implement a new harmonized sales tax system as of April 1, 1997. The detailed agreements are based on the principles outlined in the memorandum of understanding that was signed earlier this year.

Any successful negotiation requires goodwill and good faith by the parties involved. I would like to take this opportunity to thank

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the governments of the three provinces concerned and especially my counterparts in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador for the manner in which they and their officials handled the issues involved in these negotiations.

• (1510)

[*Translation*]

What helped all of us to conclude these negotiations successfully was that we shared a common objective: to give consumers and businesses a sales tax system that is simpler, more efficient and more equitable. It is a practical example of how the federal and provincial governments can collaborate to make our federal system work better.

[*English*]

For consumers, the new harmonized system will offer several important benefits. First, thanks to tax inclusive pricing, consumers will know the full price of their purchases before they get to the cash register. This is something Canadians have consistently insisted on in consultations about GST reform. At the same time, consumers will continue to know how much tax they are paying because receipts and invoices will show either the amount of tax paid or the rate at which tax has been charged.

Consumers will also benefit because sales tax rates will be substantially lower than at present in each of the participating provinces. In Newfoundland, sales tax rates will be almost five percentage points lower. In Nova Scotia and New Brunswick they will be almost four percentage points lower.

[*Translation*]

The harmonized sales tax will be good for businesses as well. They will have to deal with only one tax, not two. They will have to complete only one set of forms, not two. And, they will have to deal with only one tax administration, not two. The new system will be straightforward and simple. For example, there will be no separate requirement for businesses to register for the harmonized sales tax. Businesses that are registered for the GST will automatically be registered for the HST. Furthermore, registered businesses will continue to use the current GST return to calculate net tax remittances. When reporting tax collected and remitted, as well as claiming input tax credits, there will be no need for registered businesses to identify separately the federal and provincial components of the HST.

[*English*]

During our negotiations with the three Atlantic provinces, concerns were expressed about the taxation of books and its impact on literacy. We took those concerns seriously. They came from the Atlantic ministers themselves, but they were also expressed most articulately and most forcefully by a number of members of the federal Liberal caucus.

Members may recall that in our economic and fiscal update of October 9 we said that one of the key roles of government was to

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help give Canadians the tools they need to take advantage of the new economy. In that context the question that we have to answer today is at a time of limited resources how can we best support efforts to promote literacy.

Our answer is to target assistance to educational institutions and organizations which play a direct role in the area of such concern to us. That is why I am tabling today a notice of ways and means motion that provides a 100 per cent rebate on all books purchased by public libraries, schools, universities, colleges, municipalities, certain charities and non-profit organizations and other frontline literacy groups.

This rebate is not an isolated gesture. We introduced several measures designed to support learning and education in our 1996 budget, an increase in the education tax credit and increases to the limits on the transfer of tuition and education credits and contributions to registered education savings plans.

The 100 per cent rebate that I am announcing today means that there will be no GST on all books purchased by educational institutions and learning organizations across Canada. It means no GST on all books distributed freely in primary schools, in secondary schools and other educational settings. It means tax relief on books not only for structured learning in our schools and colleges but for lifelong learning through public libraries and front line literacy groups. These measures are effective immediately and on a national basis.

• (1515)

We have also agreed to administer a point of sale rebate in the three harmonizing provinces which will eliminate the provincial component of the tax on books. In short, there will be absolutely no increase in the taxation of books as a result of harmonization. Indeed in many cases there will be a decrease.

In closing, we do not claim that today's measure answers all the challenges we face with respect to literacy in this country. However, by targeting assistance in this way we can get greater impact for every dollar we spend at a time of limited resources.

Obviously more needs to be done. My colleague, the minister responsible for literacy, is working hard to get groups right across the country to identify and to develop the best means for working on this problem. We will continue to work closely with her to ensure that progress is made.

More often than not, real and lasting progress in government occurs in measured steps. Today's announcement on a harmonized sales tax and the rebate on books is a real, constructive and a concrete step forward in the administration of sales taxes in the promotion of literacy in our country.

[Translation]

**Mr. Yvan Loubier (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, as strange as it may seem, I would like to offer the Minister of Finance my congratulations, but I will then move right on to three complaints.

I congratulate the minister on taking a step in the right direction by abolishing the GST on books purchased by educational institutions, non-profit organizations and other organizations working in the field of literacy.

This is also a victory for the Bloc Québécois, for I would remind the finance minister that, since 1992, when there were seven members of the Bloc Québécois in this House, we have been calling for the complete removal of the GST on all books sold, not only in the case of educational institutions and non-profit organizations, but everywhere, in all provinces, in whatever manner, for the purpose of eliminating illiteracy in Canada.

We are claiming a victory, because of the initial hard work done by our seven colleagues, and because the Bloc Québécois, as the official opposition, carried on this fight for the complete removal of the GST on books.

Just as the Minister of Finance often slips bad news in with the good, the bad news is that this agreement with the Maritimes is going to cost Canadians almost one billion dollars. This is one billion dollars that Canadians outside the maritimes, as well as Quebecers, will have to pay for a political agreement with the Maritimes to fool the public into thinking that the government is doing something about the GST. If it had had to do anything, if it had had to keep its red book promise, it should have abolished the GST.

Now it is buying off the maritimes, and pretending to the Canadian people that it has taken action and sorted out part of the problem, when in fact nothing has been sorted out, and this political agreement has cost one billion dollars, 250 million of which will come from Quebecers, to make the Minister of Finance look good.

Second, I must protest the minister's lack of transparency, because nowhere in his statement does he mention this one billion in compensation that we will have to pay.

A second instance of lack of transparency pointed out by the auditor general: the minister doctored his figures in the last budget to include in the financial year ending on March 31 the \$961 million, nearly one billion, he will pay to the maritimes. Why did the minister do that? He did it so that next year, he would have even better news for us about reducing his deficit. That is doctoring figures. That is cooking the books.

• (1520)

The auditor general said it as follows: "Ottawa violates its own accounting rules". To make himself look good, the Minister of



Finance included an amount in the previous financial year, before the agreement was even signed with the maritimes. Now that is carrying transparency a bit too far.

Another case of lack of transparency is the minister's refusal to release the formula and the parameters for establishing this one billion dollar compensation for the maritimes, despite the fact that the Quebec government and other provincial governments, at the last meeting of Finance ministers, asked the federal government to come clean, for once, and release the formula for establishing this billion dollar compensation.

For instance, why should Quebec not be entitled to this kind of compensation, since it harmonized the QST with the GST back in 1991 and 1992? The government says Quebec is not entitled to compensation, but it never released the formula for calculating this compensation. That is a lack of transparency.

I want to congratulate the minister on partially abolishing the GST on books, but at the same time I have serious reservations about the transparency of the process. As far as the Minister of Finance is concerned, transparency does not exist.

[*English*]

**Mr. Herb Grubel (Capilano—Howe Sound, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance at this week's Liberal Party convention will claim that he has delivered on his red book promise and got rid of the GST. This is a false claim. Rolling the GST and PST into one in a small part of Canada does not meet the expectations raised by Liberals during the last election.

Of course, we have heard the Liberals reply to this criticism: "Read the fine print. We never promised to eliminate". In my experience neither voters nor candidates read the fine print in red books. Not even an experienced politician with a name that reminds us of the police did so. No more proof is needed.

I could raise many shortcomings of the new blended GST-PST. Let me mention just a few.

First there is the added cost for national retailers who have to print a different set of flyers, catalogues and price tags on merchandise for distribution in the Atlantic provinces and who have to change computer programs and cash registers. The Retail Council of Canada estimates this cost for all retailers to be \$100 million.

The second criticism of the agreement for the new blended retail tax is that it costs the rest of Canada \$1 billion. This payment is basically a bribe which the government was forced to pay because of the embarrassment caused by the red book. The Liberals obviously decided that the political cost of this payment was smaller than that of the broken red book promise, especially after their spin doctors told them to emphasize the fairness of the

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payment in light of adjustment costs incurred. We will see whether such payments will be made to other provinces in the future. Quebec tried to get equal treatment and failed.

We will also have to see what such equal treatment will do to the deficit. I also worry about the distribution of this adjustment assistance. Will it reach the small retailer who has to adjust his cash register and buy new computer software? How much will it cost to distribute this money to such users?

The third criticism of the deal is that it increases incentives for the underground economy. In the finance committee we heard how evasion of the GST is rampant in a number of industries; in construction, automobile repairs and many other services.

Such tax evasion is more rewarding; the larger is the gain. Since the blended tax is higher than the GST alone there will be more underground activity in untaxed income.

Fourth, the PST was a retail sales tax. In order to prevent the cascading of taxes business buyers did not have to pay the tax. As it turned out, for reasons I do not understand, many firms did pay it anyway to the tune of many millions of dollars. The blended tax falling on consumers only has to be higher in order to make up the money paid by business under the old system.

Fifth, the blended tax will not get rid of the complexity of the basic GST system. As the minister well knows, it is a nightmare. Municipalities, universities, schools and hospitals get special deals. Doctors and other professions enjoy yet another treatment. But most annoying is the special treatment given to food. "No GST on food". What a slogan. What a nightmare in practice.

• (1525)

Five doughnuts are not food; six are. Frozen pizza is a food. Pizza in a restaurant is not. I will not go on with the many examples of costly deviations from a value added tax on all transactions, as recommended by most economists and serving extremely well the people of New Zealand.

The trouble with today's announcement is that this complexity is now even higher. Books are no longer books free of tax. There are good books like the ones bought by libraries and universities and not so good books bought by everyone else. What a sham. What an administrative nightmare, a typical political compromise that serves no one.

Finally, I cannot help note that the minister in his statement claims that the tax will benefit consumers. I have trouble understanding this. I thought that the blended tax was revenue neutral. Are we now to understand that it lowers taxes?

If it does, what will be the effect on the provincial and federal deficits? If it is revenue neutral, how then can it benefit consumers?

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In sum, the entire scheme of the blended GST-PST tax in the Atlantic provinces is one gigantic failure. It cannot be justified economically and socially. It can be justified only by someone whose judgment is clouded by the desire to extricate the Liberal Party from the serious political hole of their own making.

**Mr. Solomon:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. With all due respect, I would like to have unanimous consent to say a few words in response to the minister's statement.

**The Speaker:** Is there unanimous consent?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Mr. John Solomon (Regina—Lumsden, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate this opportunity. I thank my colleagues for allowing me to respond on behalf of the New Democratic Party.

The Minister of Finance and many members of this House know that Canadians want a society in which the costs of maintaining a stronger community are distributed fairly with those who have gained the most from the community paying their fair share of taxes.

Instead, Canadians are getting a society in which rich and powerful individuals and corporations get away with paying less than their fair share, leaving the rest of us to pay the freight on reduced public services.

With respect to harmonization, it is the New Democratic Party's position that harmonization is not a fair way to deal with some of the tax situations in this country.

Members will recall that in the 1950s federal government revenues were shared 50 per cent by individuals and 50 per cent by corporations.

By 1996 those shares have changed from 50 per cent by corporations down to 6 per cent by corporations, with individuals paying about 94 per cent of the tax revenues in this country.

Corporate tax revenues in Canada, combined federal and provincial, right now are the lowest of all the G-7 nations. In fact, corporate taxes amount to 6 per cent of the gross domestic product in Canada, with the G-7 average being around 10 per cent.

The Liberals in opposition promised to abolish the GST. In fact, the GST is not only remaining, but they have expanded it to include harmonization.

Members will recall that when the federal sales tax was in place, corporations paid about half the federal sales tax and individuals paid for about half the federal sales tax. When the GST was incorporated, we saw with respect to the harmonization of the GST corporations paying zero GST and individuals paying 100 per cent of the federal sales tax, which is now the GST.

It amounted in very simple terms to about a \$7 billion or \$8 billion tax increase under the former Conservative government, which is now not only embraced by the Minister of Finance and by the Liberal government but supported and expanded to include harmonization of this tax.

We are very concerned about this effort because the harmonization, if taken across this country, would be yet a further tax increase. This is not a very fair way to deal with Canadians who are in many ways either underemployed, unemployed or facing significant personal challenges when it comes to personal financial conditions.

To expand the GST and the PST into a harmonized program really is a shortsighted effort by the government to give corporations a very significant tax cut.

• (1530)

In summary, I just want to say that New Democrats and many Canadians whom we have talked to across the country believe in fair tax reforms based on the two fundamental principles of fairness: fairness to those who are participating in our economy, and also on the ability to pay.

Those who can pay their fair share should be paying their fair share. We have seen 35 tax increases under the Minister of Finance. We have also seen Bill S-9 being passed which contained significant tax cuts for corporations and significant tax breaks for very wealthy Canadians which the Minister of Finance agrees is really an unfair tax but he embraces it and supports it.

What the minister is doing here is really unfair to Canadians. It is something I think his party and his government will have to account for once an election is called.

\* \* \*

**COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE**

## PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

**Mr. Paul Zed (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I have the honour to present the 39th report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs regarding the associate membership of some committees. If the House gives its consent, I intend to move concurrence in the 39th report later this day.

I also have the honour to present the 40th report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs regarding its order of reference of June 19, 1996 in relation to Bill C-270, an act to amend the Financial Administration Act (session of Parliament). The committee has considered Bill C-270 and reports this bill with one amendment.

## MARRIAGE (PROHIBITED DEGREES) ACT

**Mr. Tom Wappel (Scarborough West, Lib.)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-340, an act to amend the Marriage (Prohibited Degrees) Act and the Interpretation Act.

He said: Madam Speaker, the purpose of my bill can be succinctly stated. It is to ensure that the only valid marriage in Canada is one between one man and one woman. There are a few cultures and religions in the world which allow multiple wives or husbands but that is not part of Canada's history, tradition or values. There are one or two countries or states which either permit or are thinking of permitting persons of the same sex to marry but that is not part of Canada's history, tradition or values.

Canada's history, tradition and values are being challenged right now in our courts. The United States has already passed similar legislation to defend the institution of marriage. It is time for Canada to do the same. This bill will ensure that marriage remains what Canadians have always known it to be: a legal union between a single female and a single male.

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

\* \* \*

## COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

### PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

**Mr. Paul Zed (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, if the House gives its consent, I move that the 39th report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs presented to the House earlier this day be concurred in.

(Motion agreed to.)

● (1535)

### JUSTICE AND LEGAL AFFAIRS

**Mr. Paul Zed (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, there have been consultations among the parties in the House and I believe you will find there is unanimous consent for the following motions.

I move:

That, pursuant to its mandate in relation to the comprehensive review of the Young Offenders Act (phase II), and specifically to observe how the youth justice system operates in practice, the Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs (six members: four from the Liberal Party including the chair, one from the Bloc Quebecois and one from the Reform Party), be authorized to travel to Alberta, British Columbia and Whitehorse from Sunday, October, 27 to Friday, November 1, 1996 in order to hold

## Routine Proceedings

public hearings, visit sites (young offender facilities and programs), and meet with officials, and that the necessary staff do accompany the committee.

(Motion agreed to.)

### FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE

**Mr. Paul Zed (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I move:

That, in relation to its study of circumpolar co-operation, seven members of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade (five from the Liberal Party, one from the Bloc Quebecois and one from the Reform Party) be authorized to travel to Cambridge, England; Oslo and Tromsø, Norway; Stockholm, Sweden; and Copenhagen, Denmark; and that seven members from the committee (four from the Liberal Party, two from the Bloc Quebecois and one from the Reform Party) be authorized to travel to Moscow, Murmansk and St. Petersburg, Russia; and Helsinki, Finland during the period of November 2 to 9, 1996 in order to meet with, among others, parliamentarians, government officials, and indigenous peoples, and that the necessary staff do accompany the committee.

(Motion agreed to.)

\* \* \*

[Translation]

## PETITIONS

### ENDANGERED SPECIES

**Mr. Geoff Regan (Halifax West, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I would like to present a petition urging Parliament to table a bill to protect endangered species. This is only part of the petition, which was signed by a total of 70,000 people.

[English]

### IMPAIRED DRIVING

**Mr. Geoff Regan (Halifax West, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I also want to present two petitions which seek amendments to the Criminal Code to increase the penalties on those convicted of driving while impaired.

### ENDANGERED SPECIES

**Mrs. Georgette Sheridan (Saskatoon—Humboldt, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36, I have the pleasure to present a petition signed by some 10,000 Canadians whose signatures form part of a petition with 70,000 names.

These Canadians are concerned about the plight of endangered species in Canada and that there are compelling ecological, economic and ethical reasons to save Canada's irreplaceable wild species. Therefore they call upon Parliament to enact enforceable legislation that will protect Canada's endangered species.

### YOUNG OFFENDERS ACT

**Mr. Ed Harper (Simcoe Centre, Ref.):** Madam Speaker, I have four petitions to present on behalf of the constituents of Simcoe Centre today.

*Routine Proceedings*

The first group of petitioners requests that Parliament pass legislation to strengthen the Young Offenders Act, including publishing the names of young offenders, lowering the age of application and transferring serious offenders to adult court.

## HUMAN RIGHTS

**Mr. Ed Harper (Simcoe Centre, Ref.):** Madam Speaker, the second petition requests that the Government of Canada not amend federal legislation to include the phrase sexual orientation. The petitioners fear that such an inclusion could lead to homosexuals receiving the same benefits and societal privileges as married people.

• (1540)

## AGE OF CONSENT

**Mr. Ed Harper (Simcoe Centre, Ref.):** Madam Speaker, the third petition concerns age of consent laws. The petitioners ask that Parliament set the age of consent at 18 years to protect children from sexual exploitation and abuse.

## OFFICIAL SYMBOLS

**Mr. Ed Harper (Simcoe Centre, Ref.):** The final petition, Madam Speaker, deals with changes to the coat of arms of Canada. The petitioners are concerned about the secrecy which surrounded the process and request that all future changes proposed to official symbols be open to wide public consultation.

## THE ECONOMY

**Mr. Maurizio Bevilacqua (York North, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36, I am pleased to present to this House two petitions signed by the residents of York North. The subject matter of these petitions is closely related as they deal with deficit reduction and job creation, two priorities for this government.

The first petition draws to the attention of the House the government's red book commitment to reduce the deficit to 3 per cent of the GDP and the fact that we have surpassed that goal.

The petitioners call upon Parliament to continue to keep its commitment to Canadians and pursue its actions on the deficit so that the government will reach its deficit target of 2 per cent of the GDP by 1997-98.

The second petition draws to the attention of the House that in the past year alone short term interest rates have declined three percentage points, that for the last two and a half years inflation has averaged less than 2 per cent and by 1997-98 the federal deficit will have been reduced by \$25 billion.

The petitioners further draw to the attention of the House that since this Liberal government took office, over 600,000 jobs have been created.

The petitioners therefore call upon Parliament to continue to work diligently to create a healthy environment for jobs and economic growth.

## ENDANGERED SPECIES

**Mrs. Karen Kraft Sloan (York—Simcoe, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I am very pleased to rise today in the House to present petitions with approximately 10,000 names for a total of 70,000.

**Mr. Volpe:** Read out all the names.

**Mrs. Kraft Sloan:** I am going to read out all the names, yes, absolutely.

These are signed by Canadians from coast to coast to coast. They call upon Parliament to enact enforceable legislation that will protect Canada's endangered species.

## VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN

**Mr. Joseph Volpe (Eglinton—Lawrence, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, whereas section 43 of our Criminal Code allows school teachers, parents and those standing in the place of parents to use reasonable force for the correction of pupils or children under their care; whereas such reasonable force has been interpreted by the courts to include spanking, slapping, strapping, kicking, hitting with belts, sticks, extension cords and causing bruises, welts and abrasions; and, whereas such legal approval of violence against children is contrary to their fundamental right to security of the person and to equal persecution and benefit of the law without discrimination as guaranteed by our charter of rights and freedoms, the petitioners in this petition call upon Parliament to end legal approval of this harmful and discriminatory practice by repealing section 43 of the Criminal Code.

## ENDANGERED SPECIES

**Ms. Jean Augustine (Etobicoke—Lakeshore, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36, I have 10,000 signatures on a petition.

The petitioners draw the attention of the House to the following. The plight of endangered species in Canada is a national problem that continues to worsen and that there are compelling ecological, economic and ethical reasons to save Canada's irreplaceable wild species. The petitioners call upon Parliament to enact enforceable legislation that will protect Canada's endangered species.

**Mr. John Harvard (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36, I too have a petition to present. It bears 4,000 to 5,000 names.

These petitioners want parliamentarians to know that the plight of endangered species in our country is a national problem and a problem that is getting worse almost every day. The petitioners call upon Parliament to enact enforceable legislation that will protect Canada's endangered species.

*Business of the House*

[Translation]

**Mr. Clifford Lincoln (Lachine—Lac-Saint-Louis, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I would like to present petitions signed by 70,000 residents of Canada.

The petitioners warn that the difficulties experienced by endangered species in Canada are growing and that there are serious environmental, economic and ethical reasons to protect Canada's irreplaceable wildlife.

• (1545)

[English]

Therefore the petitioners ask Parliament to enact enforceable legislation that will protect Canada's endangered species.

## GRANDPARENTS

**Mr. Dan McTeague (Ontario, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I am humbled in that I only have 75 petitioners who request that the federal government amend the Divorce Act to ensure that grandparents have the right to access, that they be allowed to make inquiries and to be given information as to the health, education and welfare of their grandchildren.

## CANADIAN UNITY

**Mr. John Murphy (Annapolis Valley—Hants, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I am even more humbled because I have just 50 Canadians, but they are 50 very important Canadians.

These petitioners pray that the Parliament of Canada declare and confirm that Canada is indivisible and that the boundaries of Canada can be modified only by a free vote of all Canadian citizens as guaranteed by the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms or through the amending formula as stipulated in the Constitution.

## ENDANGERED SPECIES

**Mr. Peter Adams (Peterborough, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, as further evidence of the ground swell of support for endangered species legislation and on behalf of the Endangered Species Coalition, I present 500 to 600 pages of signatures of petitioners, residents of Canada, who point out that the plight of endangered species in Canada is a national problem that continues to worsen; that there are compelling ecological, economic and ethical reasons to save Canada's irreplaceable wild species.

These petitioners call on Parliament to enact enforceable legislation that will protect Canada's endangered species.

## IMPAIRED DRIVING

**Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I have three petitions today.

The first was forwarded to me by Mrs. Janette Lavery of my riding of Mississauga South. The petitioners draw to the attention of the House that there are profound inadequacies in sentencing

practices concerning individuals convicted on impaired driving charges.

These petitioners ask that Canada must embrace a philosophy of zero tolerance, that victims of crime must be given the highest priority and that in cases of impaired driving causing death or injury sentencing must reflect the seriousness of the crime.

The petitioners therefore pray and call on Parliament to proceed immediately with amendments to the Criminal Code that will ensure that the sentencing given to anyone convicted of driving while impaired or causing injury or death while impaired does reflect both the seriousness of the crime and zero tolerance by Canada toward this crime.

## TAXATION

**Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, the second petitioner comes from Somerset, Manitoba. 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 society.

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

## ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION

**Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, the final petition comes from Schefferville, Quebec. The petitioners draw to the attention of the House that the consumption of alcoholic beverages may cause health problems or impair one's ability, and specifically that fetal alcohol syndrome and other alcohol related birth defects are 100 per cent preventable by avoiding alcohol consumption during pregnancy.

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

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE**

**Hon. Fernand Robichaud (Secretary of State (Agriculture and Agri-Food, Fisheries and Oceans), Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I wish to inform the House that tomorrow, October 24, will be a designated day.

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**BOARD OF INTERNAL ECONOMY**

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Ringuette-Maltais):** I have the honour to inform the House that Bob Kilger, member for the electoral district of Stormont—Dundas, was appointed as a member of the Board of Internal Economy replacing Don Boudria, member for the electoral district of Glengarry—Prescott—Russell,

*Routine Proceedings*

for the purposes and under the provisions of chapter 42, first supplement to the Revised Statutes of Canada, 1985, entitled: An Act to amend the Parliament of Canada Act.

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

• (1550)

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Ringuette-Maltais):** I wish to inform the House that, because of the ministerial statement, Government Orders will be extended by 17 minutes.

[*English*]

**Mr. Bodnar:** Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I believe when you called Order Paper questions I stood and was not recognized.

\* \* \*

**QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER**

**Mr. Morris Bodnar (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Industry, Minister for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency and Minister of Western Economic Diversification, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, Question No. 73 will be answered today.

[*Text*]

Question No. 73—**Mr. Cummins:**

With regard to ground fish on the west coast, (a) what species are “below average in abundance”, (b) what species are “very low in abundance” and (c) what is the scientific data to support the above?

**Mr. Ted McWhinney (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, Lib.):** (a) The following species are considered generally “low to average in abundance”, slope rockfish (Pacific ocean perch, redstripe rockfish, yellowmouth rockfish, roughey rockfish, shortraker rockfish), inshore rockfish (red snapper and other inshore species).

A number of stocks of slope and shelf rockfish are fished, which individually may be from below average to average in abundance. More detail can be obtained in the annual report of the Pacific Stock Assessment Review Committee Groundfish Subcommittee.

Although slope rockfish have generally been considered “below average” for some time, there are indications (at least in areas north of Vancouver Island where the major fisheries occur) that abundance of these species could be “average” rather than “below average”. Additional data and analysis will be required to define stock status more precisely.

There are indications that some flatfish stocks (English sole, rock sole, Dover sole) are declining in abundance due to poor stock replenishment during the past decade, particularly in areas to the north of Vancouver Island. Additional data and analysis will be

required to more clearly define whether these are “below average”.

(b) The following species/stocks are considered “very low in abundance”: Pacific cod (all stocks), lingcod in the Strait of Georgia (offshore lingcod are considered at “average” abundance), Petrale sole.

(c) The information above comes from the latest assessment of Pacific groundfish stock status, conducted under the auspices of PSARC in July 1996.

Many kinds of scientific data are used in assessing the status of Pacific groundfish stocks: catch and fishing effort data (from sales slips, fishing logs, dockside monitoring, observer programs), data from surveys conducted on Department of Fisheries and Oceans vessels or in co-operation with industry (using trawls, traps, and acoustic methods), biological sampling data (length, weight, age, maturity), and data on ocean conditions (temperature, salinity, ocean climate trends, currents). The particular mix of data used depends on the specific species and stock. Details on the data and analyses used in assessing stock status are included in the annual reports of the PSARC groundfish subcommittee and in working papers on specific stocks.

[*English*]

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

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Ringuette-Maltais):** Is that agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

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**MOTIONS FOR PAPERS**

**Mr. Morris Bodnar (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Industry, Minister for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency and Minister of Western Economic Diversification, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, would you be so kind as to call Motion for the Production of Papers No. 6, in the name of the hon. member for Malpeque.

[*Text*]

Question No. P-6—**Mr. Easter:**

That a humble address be presented to His Excellency praying that he will cause to be laid before this House copies of the operating agreement between the Grain Transportation Agency Administrator, Canadian National Railways (CN) and Canadian Pacific Ltd. (CP) dated April 1, 1993, with respect to railway cars supplied for grain service by the Government of Canada.

**Hon. David Anderson (Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the operating agreement between the Grain Transportation Agency Administrator, Canadian National Railways and Canadian Pacific Ltd. is not available for tabling at this time.

*Government Orders*

The government is currently in the midst of structuring the process by which it will dispose of its 13,000 hopper cars, which are governed by the above mentioned agreement. As part of this process, discussions with the railways about revising the operating agreement are currently ongoing.

Public release of this document at this time may well harm the government's ability to negotiate favourable revisions to the operating agreement, ultimately resulting in a negative impact on the possible value it will get for its hopper cars.

As the document is a private agreement between the railway companies and the government, the companies' views were sought on this matter. They have expressed similar concerns about the tabling of the agreement at this time.

I therefore ask the Honourable Member to withdraw his motion.

[*English*]

(Motion agreed to.)

**Mr. Bodnar** Madam Speaker, I ask that the other Notices of Motions for the Production of Papers be allowed to stand.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Ringuette-Maltais):** Is that agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

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## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*Translation*]

### HUMAN REPRODUCTIVE AND GENETIC TECHNOLOGIES ACT

**Hon. Diane Marleau (for the Minister of Health)** moved that Bill C-47, an act respecting human reproductive technologies and commercial transactions relating to human reproduction, be now read the second time and referred to a committee.

**Mr. Joseph Volpe (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Health, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I rise today to speak to Bill C-47—

[*English*]

—an act respecting human reproductive and genetic technologies.

This government is committed to a regime that protects the health of Canadian women and children, reflects Canadian social values and ethical standards and recognizes the needs of infertile Canadians.

It is our view that a caring society demonstrates its concern by using science and technology to aid those who would otherwise be denied the joy of parenthood, while protecting those who risk being harmed both now and in the future.

Probably the most difficult question most of our parents and indeed some of us in this Chamber faced was how to name their new baby. The choices confronting those who want to become parents today are often much more vast, more technologically complex and have greater repercussions for generations to come than we have ever as individuals and as a society had to deal with.

Couples having difficulty conceiving a child have to decide to seek outside intervention, or not to seek it, as the case may be. They have to make decisions about drugs and treatment regimes. They have to balance their desire to have a child against the potential risks involved. Sometimes these would be parents have to decide whether to involve a third individual, an anonymous donor, in their search for parenthood, whether they are willing to undergo invasive and difficult procedures such as in vitro fertilization and what to do with the embryos that may be created as a result of this procedure.

Women who are already pregnant, whether through natural or assisted means, have to decide together with their partners whether to undergo prenatal diagnosis and what to do with the information once they have it. It is our opinion that we have to develop a two pronged approach to deal with many of these issues.

First, through the legislation before us today, we are proposing to prohibit certain unacceptable technologies. Second, we are developing a regulatory regime to manage safe and effective technologies that are permissible.

• (1555)

The technologies and practices that would be prohibited under today's legislation are ethically and socially questionable. They pose significant threats to the health of those who use them and to the children who are born as a result of their implementation. They have significant adverse effects on the physical and emotional well-being of children and they pose significant threats to the health of the population.

This legislation I believe is valuable in its own right, an important first step in addressing public concerns. But this is yet not enough. That is why the government has also released a position paper outlining a proposed regulatory framework for those technologies that, while acceptable, still require regulation to ensure the safety and well-being of women who depend on them, the children who emanate from their use and families that are created from them in Canada.

What we are proposing is not, as one can imagine, an easy task. Its complexity has required us to consult the status of women, heritage, finance, treasury board, industry, human resources devel-

*Government Orders*

opment, citizenship and immigration, the solicitor general, agriculture and of course the justice department. All of these ministries have been brought into the consultation process for developing this legislation because they all have interests in the legislation and in the regulatory regime that we are planning.

This government's willingness to tackle an issue of this complexity is in accord with the pledge made in the red book to make the health of women and the well-being of children a priority. It is concrete evidence of our commitment to the health, safety and ethics in the field of new reproductive and genetic technology.

New reproductive and genetic technologies have the potential to enhance the health and well-being of women, children and families. Technologies such as artificial insemination and in vitro fertilization, the process of retrieving eggs from a woman's body, fertilizing them either with her partner's sperm or with that of a donor and implanting the resulting embryo back into the woman's body, have enabled children to be born to those who otherwise might never become parents.

Prenatal diagnosis has been used not only to identify birth disorders, for example, but to identify anomalies that can be corrected at birth thanks to the knowledge gained through diagnostic procedures. These technologies can confer significant benefits on those who use them. They also, unfortunately however, hold within them the potential to threaten human dignity and to treat women and their children as well as the whole reproductive process as mere commodities.

To give one example, to date at least seven advertisements have appeared in student newspapers seeking women willing to sell their ova. In return for cash, they ask otherwise completely healthy women to take powerful drugs with unknown long term effects to stimulate multiple egg production and to undergo invasive and often painful medical procedures to retrieve those eggs. This is an inappropriate use of medical treatment. Even worse, it reduces women and the eggs they carry inside them to sheer commodities.

It is understandable, I think members will agree, when we consider the applications of technology like this one why new ways of intervening in the reproductive process have created hope for many Canadians but have also become a source of unease. The profound social, ethical, legal and health questions they raise challenge our most fundamental values.

Canadians have asked the federal government to exercise national leadership to manage these technologies in a way that protects those most affected and reflects our collective values.

• (1600 )

The Royal Commission on New Reproductive Technologies was created in recognition of the important role of the federal government in the area of new reproductive and genetic technologies.

Members in the House will recall the report entitled "Proceed with Care" as an impressive document, not only for the comprehensiveness of its 293 recommendations but for the means by which the commissioners arrived at those recommendations. Each of those recommendations was based on an ethical framework encompassing the principle of an ethic of care and eight guiding principles and on a thorough understanding of Canadian social values and attitudes.

This comprehensive and solid basis makes it difficult to disagree with the commission's conclusions that it is necessary to establish boundaries around the uses of new reproductive and genetic technologies prohibiting the most egregious and regulating those that are safe and ethical.

Since the release of the commission's report, the federal government has been working on the type of public policy called for by the commission. Because the responsibility for health is shared among the federal, provincial and territorial governments, discussions have been held between the two levels of government to identify possible areas of collaboration.

At the same time, Health Canada held bilateral consultations with some 50 key stakeholders on their reactions to the commission's recommendations. Those consultations expanded on the work of the royal commission. They confirmed that Canada needs a legislative and regulatory infrastructure to deal with the new reproductive and genetic technologies. Further, they demonstrated the necessity for the federal government to exercise national leadership in this area.

In exercising this leadership, we have been guided by a policy framework that includes a set of ethical guiding principles and a focus on the implications of the technologies for children. We have also focused on the prevention of infertility. It is sometimes identified as a priority both by the commission and by our own extensive consultations.

We feel that we must be guided by these basic principles. I will enumerate them for members. First, we must balance individual and collective interest in recognition both of the importance of reproductive autonomy and of the reality of the individual decisions in the area of reproduction that may affect the larger society.

Second, we must strive for equality between men and women. That does not mean that this issue affects men and women in the same way. The physical and social burdens and risks of reproduction are borne primarily by women and this reality should be acknowledged and be reflected as well in this reproductive policy.

Third, we must protect the welfare and dignity of vulnerable persons and groups and particularly the children who may be born through the new uses of these technologies, but also individuals or



couples seeking to use the technologies, as well as persons with disabilities.

Fourth, prevention must be a first priority to lessen the need for medical treatment of infertility. In cases where treatment is necessary there should be a progression from the simplest and least invasive treatment to the more complex. The principles of evidence based medicine must be applied to reproductive health care.

Fifth, non-commercialization of reproduction and of reproductive materials is essential. Commercialization modifies reproduction, offends human dignity and may lead to the exploitation of vulnerable persons or groups.

Sixth, accountability is paramount. Individuals have the responsibility to safeguard their reproductive and sexual health. Governments and medical practitioners have a responsibility to protect the reproductive and sexual health of their communities and of the individuals they serve.

• (1605)

I have given these ethical guidelines certain actions where clearly indicated for the government. It has begun to address the safety issues identified by the royal commission, among them the reported use of fresh semen for donor insemination with its attendant risk of HIV transmission and the potential risks associated with the use of fertility drugs.

Regulations concerning the process of testing and distribution of semen for donor insemination became legally enforceable on June 1 of this year and a surveillance program for drugs used to treat infertility is also being developed.

The voluntary moratorium on some new reproductive and genetic technologies was introduced one year ago. We recognized then that legislation in the area of new reproductive and genetic technologies would require a lengthy development process, therefore the moratorium was announced to cover nine problematic uses of reproductive and genetic technologies, together with the creation of an advisory committee on the moratorium.

This was a positive first step. It has helped the key medical specialties at work in this area in their process of policy formation. However, some unethical practices continue to be offered in Canada.

Many Canadians continue to feel that these issues are too serious for voluntary compliance. Government is responding to these concerns through this legislative action in order to transform the voluntary moratorium into one that is mandatory.

The Human Reproductive and Genetic Technologies Act is based on the common policy and ethical ground identified in extensive consultations with more than 50 stakeholder groups, and with the

### *Government Orders*

provinces and the territories. This legislation gives voice to the widespread agreement that some activities conflict so sharply with Canadian values and are so potentially harmful to the interests of the individual and of society that they must be prohibited.

The government has met three goals in this legislation: protecting the health and safety of Canadians; ensuring the appropriate treatment of human reproductive materials; and protecting the dignity and security of all persons, especially women and children.

The prohibitions listed in the legislation include the nine original prohibitions in the voluntary moratorium, together with five additional prohibitions not originally contained in the moratorium. In each case, the risks they pose to vulnerable Canadians and the offence they give to such basic values as equality between men and women and the non-commodification of reproduction justify a strong legislative response.

Let me outline them and explain in the process the ethical underpinnings for each prohibition. The first of these prohibitions is on sex selection. Attempting to select the sex of a child for non-medical purposes is abhorrent to most Canadians. I think most members here will agree. In fact, all of them agree. Despite the inclusion of sex selection in the interim moratorium, there are still at least two clinics in Canada offering this service.

Sex selection can take a number of different forms. It is prohibited under this legislation with only one exception. Sex selection is simply the most basic form of sex discrimination. To value a child primarily on the basis of his or her sex is demeaning to the child and contrary to any principle of respect for human life and dignity. It also poses significant threats to the well-being of children.

The knowledge that a child was born primarily because he or she was the "right" sex can cause significant harm to a child's sense of self-worth, to say nothing of his or her siblings who must suffer with the knowledge that they are not the right sex.

If sex selection were widely used, it could cause the male-female birth ratio to become skewed with unknown consequences for our nation.

• (1610)

However, the government recognizes that some very serious genetic disorders are sex related and that parents facing this situation will want to know the sex of the fetus. The legislation allows for this possibility. All other the uses of sex selection techniques are explicitly and firmly prohibited.

The second prohibition is on the manipulation of reproductive materials. A number of prohibitions contained in the act fall into the category of manipulating eggs, sperm, zygotes or embryos for

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various purposes. Many of the practices included in this category are somewhat familiar to us, usually from the late, late show on television for those who are insomniacs. Without making light of the issue, that is where they should stay.

Members would be horrified to see what some of those prohibitions include. It suggests practices that are beginning to develop that must be nipped in the bud. One of those is cloning the genetic materials of living or dead human beings or of zygotes, embryos or fetuses. This could produce identical copies of single persons which would diminish the value of human individuality.

We do not know yet what the health implications of being a clone might be. We know even less about whether there are any long term implications for population health by having large numbers of people who are genetically identical.

Another example is that of creating animal-human hybrids whether by using animal gametes together with human gametes or by implanting a human embryo in an animal or an animal embryo in a human. These procedures could potentially produce creatures that would be half human, half animal. The presence of these hybrids is not unusual in folklore but it is eminently undesirable in real life. The formation of such hybrids violates the most basic norms of respect for human life and dignity and denies the embryo's connection with the human community.

A third example is that which involves the altering of the genetic structure of reproductive material so that the alteration can be passed to subsequent generations or to germ-line genetic alteration. This has the potential to permanently alter the human genetic heritage at unknown risk to future generations.

We lack even a preliminary understanding of how genes interact and of how altering one gene would affect others. We do not know how altered genes would act in subsequent generations. It would be inconceivable hubris on the part of any society to risk the health of future generations in this way and completely contrary to any concern for the vulnerability of the children of the future.

A further example is the potential to manipulate the materials of reproduction that coexist with the speculation about the possibility of ectogenesis, that is, maintaining an embryo in an artificial womb until it is born. Its pursuit dehumanizes motherhood and marginalizes women from their previously central role in reproduction.

We have no idea what the health effects for children born in this manner would be. The interactions between a woman and the fetus she is carrying are essentially still a mystery to us. One thing is clear, however, as we learn more about them. These interactions are of far greater significance for the health and well-being of the child than we might suspect. The royal commission describes ectogene-

sis as "morally reprehensible". We would all be challenged to find anyone who would disagree with that finding.

The third prohibition under this legislation affects reproductive material from fetuses or cadavers. It is an indication of the speed with which developments have been made in this field that when the royal commission released its report, the issue of retrieving sperm or eggs from dead persons had not yet emerged. As members of the House are aware, it has since become a very real possibility.

• (1615)

Thus it is no longer sufficient to prohibit the use of fetal eggs as was the case in the interim moratorium. Bill C-47 must also and does prohibit the use of eggs or sperm from cadavers. To create a child from the reproductive material of a dead person or from eggs retrieved from a fetus is a frightening proposition and could create unknown psychological harm to children born in this manner.

We know that miscarriages are often the source of fetal eggs and we know that fetuses often miscarry because they carry disorders. Without knowing more about what that disorder is and whether it is genetically based, it would be taken unjustified and unjustifiable risks with a child's health to permit the use of the fetus' eggs.

The use of gametes from the deceased in order to create a child is a violation of reproductive autonomy. Even if a person gives permission for his or her gametes to be collected for fertilization after death, the potential for psychological harm to a child born in this way is too great to ignore. This prohibition is not intended to apply to the use of eggs from the fetuses or sperm or eggs from cadavers in research. Rather it is designed to prevent research aimed at producing embryos from this process.

The fourth prohibition is with regard to surrogacy. The effects of the prohibitions I have discussed so far relate primarily to what happens in laboratories. Surrogacy occurs much closer to home. Agreeing to carry and give birth to a child and then surrendering that child to another person or couple in return for monetary gain poses tremendous ethical and health related difficulties.

Surrogacy commercializes reproduction and women's reproductive capacity and it commodifies children. It forces women to undergo the risks and burdens of assisted conception and then of pregnancy and birth. It poses risks to the emotional well-being of children. When the child becomes the subject of a custody dispute or when the child is not wanted by either the birth parents or the commissioning couple, these harms are magnified.

Criminalizing such arrangements carries with it potentially serious penalties for those convicted. For that reason the targets of criminal prohibition have been carefully chosen. Anyone paying or offering to pay a woman to carry a child only to surrender it at birth

will be subject to a criminal penalty, as will any third party acting or offering to act as an intermediary in the surrogacy arrangement for profit.

Women who agree to bear children for others are often vulnerable because of the disparities in power and resources between themselves and those paying for their services. Rather than further burden such women with the risk of prosecution, the new prohibition targets the persons paying for such services. The behaviour of the so-called surrogate is not and will not be criminalized. As well, the legislation permits volunteer surrogacy arrangements so long as no payment is involved.

The fifth prohibition is on the buying and selling of reproductive materials. The prohibition against buying or selling eggs, sperm and embryos is consonant with that against commercial surrogacy arrangements.

Eggs and sperm are the basic building blocks of life. They contain the unique genetic heritage of the human being who produces them. When combined, they form embryos that have the potential to become human beings. To reduce these materials to commodities that can be bought, sold or exchanged for other goods or services is a grave offence to the principle of respect for human life and human dignity.

The practice of permitting payment for sperm and eggs also carries significant health risks. Short term financial need can induce a donor to be less honest about his or her own health and his or her own genetic family history. Unfortunately donor screening is only effective when the potential donor is forthcoming with information regarding his or her health.

Paying sperm donors thus increases the risk to the women who will receive the sperm and the children who may be born as a result. The risks inherent in paying for donated sperm accrue primarily to the recipients and to the children born as a result. There are relatively very few risks to the donor. Selling eggs on the other hand holds the potential for significant physical and medical harm to the donor as well.

• (1620)

A woman who agrees to sell her eggs is generally perfectly healthy. She would have to be in order to pass the same types of screening procedures that are used for sperm donors. She is quite probably not infertile. Yet this perfectly healthy woman will be prescribed fertility drugs with their unknown long term health effects to stimulate multiple egg production. She will also undergo invasive and painful medical interventions to retrieve these eggs. In exchange for the risk and burdens she will bear, she will go home probably about \$2,000 richer but she will have taken unknown risks with her own health and her own future fertility.

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This government cannot permit the health of vulnerable women and children to be put at risk by allowing a payment based system of sperm and egg donation to continue.

The legislation does allow doctors, clinics and sperm banks to recover expenses involved in the collection, storage and distribution of sperm, eggs and embryos. In addition, because the current practice of paying sperm donors is a significant incentive in donation, there will be a phase-in period for this aspect of the regulation to ease the transition from a commercial to a non-profit and volunteer based system.

The legislation is an advance on the interim moratorium because it prohibits payment for the donation of the human reproductive material for research purposes. This decision was made on the grounds that there is no compelling argument to be made for treating donations for research purposes any differently from donations for other purposes.

The sixth prohibition relates to embryo research. A further set of prohibitions not included in the interim moratorium have been added as a result of our extensive consultations. They have to do with embryo research.

Under the terms of Bill C-47 it will be illegal to use any human sperm, ova or embryos for research purposes without the explicit permission of the donors. Every person has the right to control the use of the products of his or her own body. Failure to obtain consent violates the principles of individual autonomy and respect for the vulnerable.

It will also be illegal to fertilize eggs or to create embryos outside the human body solely for the purposes of research. Some couples choose to donate surplus embryos from in vitro fertilization for research purposes. We acknowledge their generosity in facilitating research that could help other infertile couples. But the field of embryo research is growing and some scientists have argued for a more abundant supply of research embryos than can be achieved through donation. This government does not accept this argument.

Regardless of the potential for embryo research to give us much more information about the human condition, the need for embryos for research is not compelling enough to justify their creation and use solely for this purpose. All human embryos have the potential to become human beings. To create them without this end in mind commodifies them and undermines human dignity.

Finally, it will be illegal to conduct research on human embryos any later than 14 days after conception. Since human embryos may eventually become fetuses which will become human beings, the question of how far into their development research should be permitted is far from merely academic. The issue has been widely debated and there is an international consensus that 14 days is an appropriate end point. Bill C-47 signals agreement with the federal

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discussion group on embryo research which accepted this international standard.

In addition to the specific prohibitions that I have outlined here, the legislation makes it an offence to offer to provide or to offer to pay for any of the services prohibited in the act. This will also help to prevent the creation of a supply and a market for these services.

• (1625)

The legislation sets significant penalties for those who are found to be in violation of any of the provisions of the act. There is a maximum penalty of \$500,000 or 10 years in prison. As a government we are committed to the principles of non-commercialization of reproduction and the protection of vulnerable women and children. This legislation and the penalties for disobeying it demonstrate that commitment.

Critics of this legislation will argue that prohibiting reproductive practices violates Canadians' rights to reproductive autonomy. I think they forget that no right is absolute when it causes harm to society as a whole or to other individuals. We are mindful of the need to respect reproductive autonomy, but we are also mindful that the practices and uses of technology prohibited in this legislation have the potential for tremendous harm to children, to women and to the value of human life in our society.

Indeed many of the practices that are being prohibited in this legislation themselves have significant implication for women's reproductive autonomy. Factors that affect women's relative social and economic status can render the whole concept of reproductive autonomy meaningless. Some women may be tempted for instance to sell their eggs or to enter into commercial preconception arrangements to support themselves. Without adequate protection such as those found in this act, women can be particularly susceptible to the adverse consequences of these technologies.

Unlike most medical treatments in which the individual alone bears the burden or benefit of the intervention chosen, those using new reproductive technologies pass on those benefits and those burdens to their children. New reproductive technologies have implications for children's health, including the unknown risks arising out of the use of fertility drugs.

Children born through the use of donor gametes face legal uncertainty concerning their familial relationships, and they face uncertain impacts on their emotional well-being. Families of children born through donated sperm or eggs told the commission of the great strain caused by trying to keep the child's origin secret and by the lack of information available to them when and if their child asks about his or her genetic parents.

This legislation does not offend reproductive autonomy. It balances the need to protect the interests of vulnerable women and

children with the right of individuals to become parents and the needs of research that will help them attain that goal.

Some may claim that prohibition against buying or selling sperm, eggs and embryos may result in a shortage of sperm for donor insemination. As I said earlier, the prohibition on buying and selling sperm will be phased in over time. This will allow sperm banks and medical professionals to adjust their recruiting practices and will also allow for education and promotion to encourage voluntary donation.

Human reproduction is far too precious to make the use of donated gametes a matter for the marketplace. Our commitment is to the realization of an open gamete donation model with no commercialization and no anonymous donation. This is in line with the international trend away from commercialization and toward more open systems. We are not alone in addressing this issue in this fashion. There are strong international precedents for all aspects of this legislation.

For instance, since 1990 the United Kingdom has prohibited the creation, storage or the usage of an embryo unless subject to a licence. The conditions of the licence include prohibitions against retaining or using an embryo later than 14 days, placing an embryo in an animal, cloning, or mixing human and animal gametes. Separate legislation prohibits commercial surrogacy arrangements.

Germany too has had a wide range of prohibitions in place since 1990, including fertilizing ova for any reason except pregnancy, using technology for sex selection, artificial fertilization after the death of a gamete donor, artificial alteration of human germline cells, cloning, and the creation of animal-human hybrids.

• (1630)

Recently France has created a series of new offences, including the creation or use of human embryos for commercial purposes and the creation of embryos for research or experimental purposes.

Most Australian states prohibit a variety of new reproductive technologies including cloning, the production of animal-human hybrids, altering the genetic structure of an egg or embryo and the sale of gametes or embryos.

This legislation puts Canada squarely in the position of supporting an international trend to limit the uses of science and technology when they contravene deeply held societal values.

This legislation is also squarely within the Canadian tradition of using the criminal law to protect Canadians' health, safety and common values. Most health law is based on misuse of the criminal law and the courts have traditionally recognized these as valid exercises of Parliament's authority.

The decision to prohibit certain technologies and practices was made in light of a commitment to the health and well-being of women, children and families in Canada. It is based upon a strong ethical framework that incorporates the fundamental principles of the non-commercialization of reproduction and the protection of those at risk, particularly the women who use them and the children who are born as a result.

The timely passage of this legislation will provide the needed protection not only to women and children but to a society that has shown it is apprehensive about its impacts.

Its passage, however, still leaves an estimated 500,000 Canadians affected by infertility. The inability to have one's own biological child is a source of grave distress to many people. We take this issue seriously. We believe there is a need for national leadership in responding to the needs of the infertile. That is why the legislation before the House today is but one part of the government's approach to a comprehensive management regime for new reproductive and genetic technologies.

The royal commission recommended, which in this regard has been confirmed by the government's own consultations, that technologies that are ethically and socially acceptable to Canadians and that have been shown to be both safe and effective should be available to Canadians within a regulated framework.

Madam Speaker, I realize you are signalling that I am at the end of my time, but I feel that the seriousness of the topic would warrant a few more moments of reflection. I ask if the House will give its unanimous consent to extend my time another few minutes.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Ringuette-Maltais):** Is there unanimous consent?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Mr. Volpe:** Madam Speaker, I thank you and my colleagues on both sides of the House for your graciousness.

We cannot ignore the reality that these technologies are already in use in Canada. In 1994 an estimated 8,500 donor insemination cycles were performed in hospitals and clinics across Canada. This is in addition to an unknown number of cycles conducted in the offices of private practitioners. Currently about 5,000 cycles of in vitro fertilization are performed each year in Canada. These procedures result in the birth of as many as 2,000 children each year. So far, however, the regulation of these infertility treatments has fallen almost exclusively to the medical professionals involved. It is clear from both the royal commission's work and from the government's consultation that self-regulation is not sufficient given the wide ranging implications for women and children.

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In the late spring of this year we released a position paper outlining the proposed regulatory regime when Bill C-47 was introduced. We have been discussing the proposals in this paper with the provinces and territories and with all the stakeholder groups. We are working to develop a consensus on the most effective regulatory framework for managing new reproductive and genetic technologies. This component of the management regime will be introduced in a second bill which will amend the bill before the House today. The result will be a single piece of legislation containing both prohibitions and regulatory controls that will provide a comprehensive management system.

The government is proposing a system which would regulate the collection, processing, distribution and use of reproductive material to provide infertility treatments such as in vitro fertilization and donor insemination and in the conducting of medical research. The same system would also deal with the collection, processing, distribution and use of human fetal tissue for medical procedures and medical research.

Three principles will guide us in our regulatory proposals. First, the protection of the health and safety of Canadians in the provision of medical procedures and in the conduct of medical research. Second, the assurance of appropriate treatment of human reproductive materials and the fetal issue and the recognition of the potential to form life. Third, the protection of the dignity of all people, especially women and children, in relation to the use of human reproductive materials in fetal tissue.

• (1635)

Another function of the regulatory regime would be to establish registries of information regarding the use and long term effects of new reproductive and genetic technologies. These registries would include a donor offspring registry to collect data on the identity of all sperm, egg and embryo donors and any resulting children that might be born from their use; a fertility treatments registry to gather information about the provision outcome of infertility treatments; a drug surveillance program for fertility drugs to track any adverse effects of the drugs on the women and men who take them and any children born as a result of their use; and a health surveillance system to track any short or long term health effects for children born from assisted reproduction.

I have outlined how we will proceed with our legislative program for a comprehensive management regime for new reproduction and genetic technologies. It is a management regime that will protect the interests of vulnerable Canadians, particularly women and children, while addressing the needs of infertile individuals. However, the new reproductive technologies cannot be seen in isolation from concerns about overall reproductive and sexual health.

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This government made a red book commitment to a multidisciplinary approach to women's health and one that recognizes the important role of social and economic factors. In this spirit we are developing a framework for sexual reproductive health to co-ordinate national efforts and to facilitate a coherent and integrated response to issues related to sexual and reproductive health.

This framework will provide the basis for a comprehensive strategy for the prevention of infertility with an emphasis on educating Canadians about healthy sexual practices.

The federal government has recently completed the first phase in the provincial-territorial consultations on the framework. Health Canada is also examining the implications of a more open system of information sharing in gamete and embryo donation.

There is a growing recognition that, like adopted children, children born through donated gametes or embryos may wish to know about their genetic parents and even their identities and that the inability to get such information may have negative consequences for them.

Moving toward a more open system with more readily available non-identifying information would be consistent with the goal of the protection of the vulnerable and consistent with the need to recognize the well-being of children as a priority.

Finally, this government is committed to working with the provinces, the territories, non-governmental organizations and the public to examine the place and future direction of prenatal diagnosis and genetics in society.

Even though I am not finished, I realize that I am wearing everyone's patience a little, but I think members can appreciate the seriousness of the content of this bill. I hope that all members will look at it with the same sort of grave approach with which we all have addressed the issue to date and give it not only their thorough and diligent consideration but their support as well.

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Pauline Picard (Drummond, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to take part in this debate on Bill C-47, which is now at second reading. Bill C-47 is a bill respecting human reproductive technologies and commercial transactions relating to human reproduction.

New human reproductive technologies raise many concerns and questions, primarily with respect to the technologies per se. Their development, use and commercialization is growing at a rate that even the main players involved can hardly sustain.

But these concerns are even more troubling, from a social and ethic point of view, when we try to determine what the balance should be between the use of these reproductive technologies and human beings' control over their bodies, which technologies are

morally acceptable and which are not, and to what extent they may be used by researchers and infertile couples.

Also, as this exponential growth in genetic medicine and new reproductive technologies, or NRTs, is taking place, a dwindling birth rate is causing some concern and prompting more and more people to turn to these technologies, which emphasizes the urgent need for a framework governing this developing sector.

● (1640)

What kind of framework is required? That is the question we must ask ourselves as we consider this bill.

Many organizations dealing with NRTs and the official opposition as well have pressed the federal government to do the responsible thing and table amendments to the Criminal Code. In response to these various questions, on June 6, the Minister of Health introduced Bill C-47 and a regulatory scheme dealing with NRTs.

Again, this government is proving unable to stick to what was recommended in terms of criminalizing certain procedures. True to itself, it is trying once again, with its proposed regulations, to encroach on exclusive provincial jurisdictions.

Bill C-47 answers but a fraction of the numerous questions raised by this growth sector. It prohibits a number of human reproductive technologies and genetic manipulations as well as commercial transactions relating to human reproduction.

Under these provisions, 13 human reproduction and genetic engineering techniques are now prohibited. Of these, eight were already subject to so-called voluntary moratorium, where those who keep pushing the limits of these technologies further and further were in charge of ensuring that such procedures no longer be used. Needless to say that this voluntary moratorium was a total failure.

The government has always been lax on the issue of new technologies; that is nothing new. As early as 1977, a Canadian coalition of feminist groups asked that a royal inquiry commission be set up immediately to study the impact and the regulations of new reproductive technologies. According to the coalition, it was essential and urgent to hold a debate on the progress made in the use of these technologies and to regulate them. This was in 1977, almost 20 years ago.

The inability of the federal system to adapt and to improve things was once again demonstrated, since we had to wait 12 years before the federal government would listen and finally pretend to act. Twelve years passed. Finally, on April 3, 1989, the government announced, in a speech from the Throne, that a commission of inquiry would review new reproductive technologies and their impact. Twelve years during which there was neither act nor guidelines to regulate a scientific sector that was evolving by leaps and bounds. Twelve years during which everything was allowed in

the name of humanity and science. This is scary, considering that the world's worst atrocities were often committed in the name of humanity and science.

The Baird commission, named after its chairperson, was supposed to complete its work in two years, but finally tabled its final report in November 1993. During these years, the commission heard over 40,000 witnesses and reviewed the works of more than 300 researchers from all over the world. This exercise ended up costing close to \$30 million. Incidentally, not one province was consulted at the time of the Baird commission.

In its final report, which required incredible dedication, the commission made 293 recommendations to the federal government. These range from restricting certain practices to completely prohibiting others, such as paying surrogate mothers and selling ova and sperm.

The conclusions and the main recommendations are somewhat similar to those of similar studies conducted abroad, including the Warlock report, released in Great Britain, in 1980. However, the Baird commission also made recommendations beyond the scope of its initial mandate, going as far as dealing with issues as varied as the effect of tobacco and drug use, health and safety in the workplace, family law and civil responsibilities.

• (1645)

But regardless how good a report is, nothing will change if there is no political will on the federal government's part to take the necessary action to correct a situation. This is precisely what is happening with the new reproductive technologies.

After ten years of public debate, after a royal inquiry commission spent four years, at a cost of close to \$30 million, to produce a huge report of over 1275 pages and to make 293 recommendations to the federal government, and after experts from Health Canada and the Department of Justice spent over two years reviewing the report, the government was still not prepared to make a move in 1993.

However, in May of 1994, the Minister of Justice said a bill would be introduced in the fall of that year. The answer came over a year after the minister's statement and, far from being the promised bill, it was in the shape of a so-called voluntary moratorium imposed by the former health minister, in July 1995.

This moratorium, with its contradictory tag of "voluntary", asked the principal players in the field of new reproductive technologies to refrain from certain practices, which I will enumerate for you: preconception contracts, in which a woman is paid to be a surrogate mother; the sale or purchase of human ova, sperm or embryos; the selection of a child's sex without a medical reason; free *in vitro* fertilization for women unable to afford this service in exchange for ova; the alteration of human genetic material present in ova, sperm or embryos and its transmission to a subsequent

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generation; experimentation to maintain an embryo to term in an artificial uterus; the cloning of human embryos; the creation of hybrids of humans and animals; the use of ova from foetuses or cadavers to produce babies or for research purposes.

A voluntary moratorium on these practices was outrageous. Greeted with absolute indifference, this moratorium was a bald admission of the Liberal government's complete lack of vision in this area.

The former minister herself said that these new technologies were unacceptable, that they threatened human dignity and raised serious social, ethical and health questions, in addition to relegating procreation, women and children to the status of mere commodities. And the response was a voluntary moratorium.

It would allow the main stakeholders in the field of new reproductive technologies the freedom, however, to decide whether or not to continue with what they were doing. In this field, where science is evolving so quickly that even specialists are having trouble keeping up, the main stakeholders were going to be both judge and judged. And during all this time, when the sheep were being guarded by the wolves, the wolves were looking out for themselves and expanding their activities, without a worry in the world.

It is hard to believe, when we look at the pathetically insignificant action taken, that this voluntary moratorium was designed to do anything more than mislead the public into thinking that something was being done.

Less than six months after the moratorium was imposed, and faced with criticism and warnings about the predictable ineffectiveness of these measures, the government had a brilliant idea: create an advisory committee—another one; when they no longer know what to do, they create advisory committees, they create agencies charged with overseeing the advent of new reproductive and genetic technologies and advising the deputy minister of health on the extension of the moratorium to practices other than those initially targeted.

In other words, this committee had no authority to enforce the moratorium because the moratorium was voluntary, and reported infractions observed not to the government but to the deputy minister of health. As though anyone at the health department needed a committee to tell it what everyone knew already, which was that the voluntary moratorium was not putting a stop to anything, and that the situation, far from improving, was taking a turn for the worse.

A striking example of just how bad the situation was becoming was an advertisement placed in a University of Toronto student newspaper last January. This classified ad was for a white woman between the ages of 23 and 32 who would be willing to sell her ova. Although no specific amount was mentioned, we know that such

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transactions can turn to about \$2,000 or more. This ad caused a general uproar among the public, both in Quebec and Canada.

• (1650)

The uproar was not about to die down, because a similar ad published at Wilfrid Laurier University promised financial compensation, not for the sperm collected, since there is a moratorium on this, but to pay for the time and travel expenses of the generous donor. Needless to say, this ad was intended as a direct attack on the voluntary moratorium requested by the Minister of Health at the time.

Following these disturbing ads in student newspapers at universities, the former Minister of Health said she was upset and very concerned about the fact this was being done commercially and that women and children were more or less being treated as merchandise. She announced a bill that would contain vigorous measures—she said in a matter of weeks—to prevent trafficking in sperm and human ova. This was on January 16, 1996.

In any case, the government managed to table a bill on new reproductive technologies. There will be two stages. Bill C-47, which defines prohibited procedures, and later, regulations that will be added to the bill. Here, we say to improve Bill C-47.

After many years of waiting and statements by the federal government that it would do its duty with respect to NRT, we expected the bill to be far more thorough and comprehensive than is the case with Bill C-47, introduced by the Minister of Health.

This bill is an admission by the government that the voluntary moratorium requested in July 1995 was a failure. Bill C-47, in that it recycles provisions that were already part of the moratorium and adds a few new provisions, may be seen as a more forceful version of the existing moratorium.

We will take a closer look. In section 1—

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Ringuette-Maltais):** Honourable members, it is my duty, pursuant to Standing Order 38, to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the hon. member for Rosedale—Bosnian Elections; the hon. member for Burnaby—Kingsway—Canada Pension Plan; the hon. member for Lévis—the Joffre Shop.

**Mrs. Picard:** In clause 1, the French text lacks the precision of the English text. In fact, the term «manipulation génétique» used in the French version is more restrictive than the English term “genetic technologies”. Furthermore, the difference between the short title and the long title is astonishing. The long title is about reproductive technologies and related commercial operations, while the short title adds the term “genetic technologies”.

Furthermore, a distinction should have been made between assisted procreation and basic research. In the former, care and

treatment are involved, while the latter is about genetic research. These are two specific areas that should be kept strictly separate.

In clause 2, which concerns definitions, we see that the definition of certain terms does not correspond to the medical definition and that a number of technical terms were left out. This will be fertile ground for legal debate when the first violations are dealt with.

In clauses 4(1)(a) and (b), the cloning of human embryos and making animal-human hybrids were already covered by the moratorium. The same applies to the altering of genetic material in clause 4.1(e), and the use of reproductive material from cadavers or foetuses in clauses 4.1(f) and (g).

In clauses 4.1(h) and (i) we see other controversial measures that were also part of the notorious moratorium, such as choosing the sex of a child on the basis of non-medical criteria.

• (1655)

The same goes for clauses 4(1)(j) and (k) regarding ectogenesis, that is to say, maintaining an embryo in an artificial uterus.

As provided for in clauses 4(1)(c) and (d), Bill C-47 also applies to the fusion of human and animal zygotes and the implantation of a human embryo in an animal.

Clause 5 formally prohibits paying a surrogate mother or using intermediaries for that purpose.

Clause 6, which prohibits the sale or purchase of ova, sperm or embryos, including their barter or exchange for goods, services or other considerations, was already in the moratorium.

Clause 7 bans the use of any sperm, ova or embryo without the informed consent of the donor.

Clause 8 makes Bill C-47 coercive by providing for fines of up to \$500,000 and prison terms of up to 10 years. The government wants to send a clear message.

In this respect, if we take the analysis a little further, we can predict that any such fines would be appealed to the Supreme Court. In fact, under section 7 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of the person.

The 1988 Morgentaler ruling and the 1989 L'égère decision established that section 7 of the charter may include certain choices made about one's own body. This section is tied to the notion of human dignity, which includes the right to make certain fundamental decisions free of any government intervention.

Clause 12 gives the minister the right to designate inspectors and analysts. The door is open to giving the minister the power to designate the staff of the agency he would create in phase 2 of the government policy. This clause is typical of the Liberal govern-



ment, which could not care less about the openness this kind of appointment requires.

Bill C-47 is an incomplete measure that is far from meeting the expectations raised by this government. He admits it himself on page 48 of the information paper on setting limits for health protection purposes, which states that the government is now set to start the third and most complex phase of its NRT management information scheme, which consists in developing regulations. The admission could not be clearer and goes to show that most of work lies ahead.

This second phase the federal government is hoping to complete consists in regulating new reproductive technologies by introducing another bill, which will amend Bill C-47. As I said earlier, we have been waiting for comprehensive and responsible legislation since 1977. When all is said and done, there should be a single piece of legislation covering both prohibited procedures and regulations respecting authorized procedures. These procedures would include: in-vitro fertilization; insemination by a donor; the use of foetal tissue; the preservation, manipulation and donation of ova, sperm and human embryos; research on embryos; pre-implantation diagnostic, and postmenopausal pregnancy.

But the proposed regulations contain an element that has become a trademark of the federal government, and this one in particular, namely a national agency to control and monitor new reproductive technologies.

This agency would be responsible for issuing licenses, inspecting clinics and enforcing regulations. It seems it would also be in charge of monitoring the development of NRTs and advising the federal health minister in this respect.

While officially operating at arm's length from Health Canada, this agency would be required to submit to the will of the minister. Page 35 of the aforementioned document states that, by law, the minister could establish general guidelines for the regulatory body. So much for independence.

• (1700)

It goes without saying that setting up a national agency will inevitably result in the establishment of national standards over which the provinces will, of course, have no authority at all.

Even more disturbing is the fact that, in addition to the measures to prohibit or regulate NRTs, this body could be given the responsibility of developing and implementing measures affecting areas other than NRTs.

The Bloc Quebecois repeatedly asked the federal government to criminalize certain practices relating to NRTs. While the provinces have jurisdiction over health, it is incumbent upon the federal

### *Government Orders*

government to make changes to the Criminal Code. While this bill appears to meet our wish that certain practices be criminalized, it is not at all an amendment to the Criminal Code which comes under the responsibility of the provincial governments, including Quebec. Rather, this is a parallel act unrelated to the Criminal Code and whose implementation will come under federal jurisdiction.

Indeed, the consent of the Attorney General of Canada is required to initiate proceedings. This implies that the compliance and enforcement activities relating to this act will not come under the responsibility of provincial authorities. This opens the door to the establishment, as already announced, of a national agency to control NRTs. It is this body which, given the federal government's will, would be responsible for managing and implementing applicable rules and, more importantly, which would deal with eventual proceedings under the future act. Such is the real purpose of the bill before us. It is a far cry from what the official opposition asked.

Federal involvement in the health sector, with all the duplication and the unilateral and successive cuts to the funds for the provinces, is a good example of the inconsistency and ineffectiveness of federal interference in an area of provincial jurisdiction.

I do not know how many times I have read the Constitution Act. According to sections 92(7) and (8) of the act of 1867, and based on the interpretation made by the courts, health and social services should come under the exclusive jurisdiction of Quebec. But this did not prevent the federal government from getting constantly involved, since as early as 1919, and even forcing Quebec to comply with so-called national standards and objectives.

This intrusion, made possible thanks to the federal government's spending authority, allows this government to get involved in areas that come under the exclusive jurisdiction of the provinces.

The federal government is thus able to redistribute monies in the form of subsidies, tied to conditions that the provinces must meet unless they want to be cut off altogether.

However, these transfers have been reduced in any case, whether Quebec and the provinces met the standards or not. For the past fifteen years, successive cuts have created a shortfall of \$12.3 billion in the case of Quebec alone, including \$7.9 billion for health care.

These repeated cuts in funding for health care do not show a government that is terribly concerned about the health care system. Of course, these successive reductions in funding were never accompanied by an increase in flexibility with respect to meeting national standards.

This kind of blackmail of using our own tax money, threatens the very future of the health care system as we know it today.

*Government Orders*

Although the Bloc Québécois and the Quebec government have pleaded with the federal government to withdraw from health care, the latter has always turned a deaf ear. We see a good example today in Bill C-47 and, especially, the draft regulations which have been announced. However, the government can no longer afford its ambitious policies. We urge the government to give back these financial resources and withdraw altogether from an area that is the exclusive jurisdiction of the provinces.

By the way, there has been a first step in Bill C-47, which provides that a province may withdraw from enforcing this regulatory component. However, once again, the first step will be the last.

• (1705)

First of all, it will be up to the federal government to decide whether an equivalent system exists or not. Quebec and the provinces would have no say in this decision. Similarly, should the federal government decide whether an equivalent system exists, it could withdraw from this provincial jurisdiction and then reverse its decision at any time, on the grounds that the province no longer meets the requirements, and it could do so unilaterally, without consulting the province.

Second, it would be not be possible for a province, even if there were an equivalent system, to escape the prohibitions described in Bill C-47, much less receive adequate financial compensation.

In concluding, it is clear that with Bill C-47, this government is looking at far more than criminalization. It is trying to interfere with health care and with the treatment of certain products connected with NRT, activities that clearly come under the jurisdiction of Quebec and the provinces.

This is a contradiction of what was requested by the official opposition and the Government of Quebec. It is a contradiction of the division of powers, and finally, because of increasing federal intrusion in health care, it goes against the principles of efficiency and common sense.

I will tell you why the Bloc Québécois will not vote for Bill C-47. We are against the bill for the following reasons: there is no amendment to the Criminal Code; several clauses, definitions and terms are vague, which could lead to interpretation problems; the bill is incomplete; it announces the creation of a national agency which is unacceptable; and Bill C-47 perpetuates federal intrusion in an area over which Quebec and the provinces have jurisdiction.

We want to ask the Minister of Health and his officials to go back and do their homework.

[*English*]

**Mr. Chuck Strahl (Fraser Valley East, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to speak to the subject of human reproduction and the

genetic technologies act. This bill is very timely. Research is advancing at an unprecedented rate. We do not yet know the limits of our own research and perhaps we do not know even if there are any limits at all.

The ethical questions raised by our accelerating knowledge are enormous. Just because we are now able to do something, does that mean we should do it? Clearly there are ethical limits to our activities and our answers to these ethical questions will define our society since they deal with the very definition and determination of life.

The commission itself has noted that this issue has moral implications for Canadian society. It is important therefore that all of us put aside our partisanship, study these issues with the sincerity that is deserved and bring our most deeply held beliefs and those of our constituents to bear.

In my own case, as a Christian, I believe that life is a gift of God. While animal and vegetable life are wonderful, beautiful, valuable and necessary life forms, human life is something more. It is distinct, it is different. That is why all people are special and human life must be treated with special dignity. To be human is to be noble. It is a thing of high honour. We are not worthy of that dignity because of utility, because of what we can do or how well we can communicate, or how strong, or how smart or how useful to society we are; humanity is in and of itself a priceless identity.

It is no wonder that the commission wrestled so strenuously with these reproductive issues, since the technology and practices covered in this bill, for example, have spiritual, moral, as well as economic, scientific and social consequences. Perhaps that is why it entitled its report "Proceed with Care".

• (1710)

Since this is the second reading debate I would like to identify the principle of the bill and take a position on it. I would also like to identify two major objections to the bill in its present form in the hope that these will be remedied in committee or by subsequent legislation.

On the content of the bill, clause 4 expressly prohibits 11 listed procedures referred to by some authorities as NRGTs or new reproductive and genetic technologies. These include the cloning of human embryos, the transfer of embryos between humans and other species, the creation of animal-human hybrids, genetic manipulation and the taking and either implanting or fertilizing sperm or eggs from cadavers or fetuses. Clauses 5, 6 and 7 of the bill expressly prohibit two other activities impacting on human reproduction, namely the commercialization of surrogacy arrangements and the buying and selling of eggs, sperm, zygotes, embryos or fetuses.

*Government Orders*

My first objection is that not all 13 activities proscribed by the bill are of the same order or deserve to be subject to the same prohibitions. For example, there will be legitimate debate in scientific quarters as to whether all of the 11 procedures listed in clause 4 should be subject to a blanket prohibition or whether some of the proscribed activities should be allowed to proceed under strict scientific controls for the sake of increasing our understanding of human life and enhancing its proper development.

It is also apparent that those activities listed in clauses 5 and 6 relating to surrogate mothers and providing the prerequisites for in vitro fertilization are qualitatively different from the activities covered by clause 4. They should, therefore, be subject to a different form of regulation so as not to put unnecessary obstacles in the way of childless couples and their doctors seeking to improve the couples' chances of having children. In other words, I am saying that the bill should be split, that the subject matters of clauses 5, 6 and 7 should be dealt with in a different manner from the activities proscribed in clause 4.

The broad principle of the bill before us is to bring all the described activities under regulation by law. This principle of regulation by law is one which I support and I would urge my colleagues to support it as well.

As I said earlier, we are dealing here with the very building blocks of human life. We are not dealing with property. We are not dealing with inanimate matter. We are dealing with human life.

While I and my party are great believers in the marketplace, I do not believe that marketplace mechanisms are appropriate mechanisms for governing technologies and procedures for the reproduction of human life. None of us believes that human beings should be bought and sold, although there was a time when European and American law tolerated such practices and such transactions were governed by market mechanisms.

The most basic principles of Canadian law and Canadian society condemn and prohibit any trafficking in human life. I would not like to see those principles violated by now permitting unregulated market forces, the impersonal play of supply and demand, to regulate reproductive or genetic altering practices.

At the same time, most of us in the House have great respect for science and the managerial and peer group assessment processes which govern scientific activity. We are also well aware that self-regulation of the development and application of new technologies by science is not without danger and in the past has been insufficient to prevent gross misuse of technologies such as nuclear and germ warfare technologies, destructive to human life.

As history has shown, science can be counted on to ask of technology can we. It cannot always be counted on to ask should we. If the scientist out of moral conviction does answer the question should we, and the answer is no, science does not have the capacity to ensure that no means no.

For these reasons science itself cannot stand as the sole regulatory gatekeeper of new reproductive and genetic technologies. I therefore suggest that regulation of the reproductive technologies and genetic altering practices identified in the bill cannot be left to unregulated market forces or to the good intentions of the science community but must be made subject to regulation by law. This is the basic principle of the bill for which I would urge qualified support.

• (1715)

The second objection to this bill is more substantive. While agreeing with the principle that the reproductive technologies and genetic altering practices referred to in this bill should be subject to regulation by law, I do not believe that this should be regarded as synonymous with direct regulation by the government.

The preamble of the bill states that the Parliament of Canada acknowledges the health and ethical dangers inherent in the commercialization of human reproduction. The Parliament of Canada should also acknowledge that there are health and ethical dangers in direct state regulation of reproductive and genetic technologies. Historically, the greatest abuses of reproductive technologies and genetic research have not been perpetrated by private enterprise for commercial reasons; they have been perpetrated by governments for ideological and political purposes.

The most frightening example of such atrocities is of course the Nazi regime which conducted genetic experiments in the name of racial purity, in the hope of creating a super race. Experiments in the former Communist bloc and even by well-intentioned governments throughout the western world testify to the dangers when the state is allowed to play the role of God.

Unfortunately the enforcement and regulatory section of this bill is very rudimentary and incomplete. It is the weakest part of the entire bill. It calls for offences under the act to be determined by inspectors designated by the minister and calls upon the courts to impose fines or terms of imprisonment in respect to offences under the act. The governor in council is empowered to make regulations for carrying out the purposes and provisions of this act.

We have no confidence that this rudimentary regulatory regime is adequate for the purposes of the act and are convinced that it is not adequate to prevent abuses of reproductive technologies and genetic altering practices by the state itself. It is our understanding that this bill is to be followed soon by another statute specifically outlining a better form of regulation. Our recommendation would

*Government Orders*

be that regulation of these technologies by law be assigned to a quasi-judicial regulatory tribunal acting at arm's length from the government itself.

In summary, I would therefore urge hon. members to support the bill in principle, the principle being that the practices described in this bill should be subject to regulation by law.

Second, I urge members to support the splitting of the bill so that technologies and practices immediately applicable to assisting childless couples to have children are dealt with separately from the other practices prohibited by this bill.

Third, I urge members to recognize that total state control over the technologies described in this bill could be as dangerous to Canadians as unfettered commercialization and that regulation of such activities should be entrusted to a quasi-judicial regulatory body at arm's length from the government.

I must add that my support in principle does not imply support for any subsequent bill setting out this regulatory framework. Unless such a bill spells out adequate safeguards against abuse of power by the state as well as by the marketplace or by scientific researchers, we will be obliged to oppose it at that time.

I trust that these observations will be helpful to other hon. members. I look forward to their contributions in the debate, as the secretary of state mentioned earlier, on this very grave and serious matter.

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for Annapolis Valley—Hants on debate. Colleague, before you begin, unless there is direction otherwise, we will be ringing the bells at 5.30 p.m. I just say that so you will know how much time you have.

**Mr. John Murphy (Annapolis Valley—Hants, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak on behalf of those who cannot speak for themselves: the children who were born and who will be born from the use of new reproductive and genetic technologies.

Most medical treatments involve only individuals who consent to bear the benefits and burdens of the treatment. Assisted reproduction techniques such as donor insemination and in vitro fertilization are different. There are the interests of another party to consider, those of the children who will be born through their use.

As a society we sympathize with those who are infertile and wish to help them reach their goals at having a child. But we must not forget that we have to consider more people than just those suffering from infertility.

• (1720)

The health and well-being of children must be of paramount importance in the decisions we make about new reproductive and genetic technologies. The value of children in our society is

self-evident but it is important to state firmly and unequivocally that children are not a means to an end. They are of value not because of the great gifts they possess, not because of the way in which they fulfil their parents' dreams and not even because of the joy they bring to their parents. Children are of value merely because they exist, because they are.

This government does value children. It believes that the hallmark by which our society can be judged is the priority that is placed on the interests and well-being of children. The government has established a transparent and explicit framework for its policy on new reproductive and genetic technologies.

Concern for children's interests is the vital aspect of that framework. The government also approaches the issue of children and new reproductive technologies from the perspective of a need to protect those who are vulnerable to adverse consequences of these technologies. And who indeed is more vulnerable in our society than a child?

New reproductive and genetic technologies affect children in different ways. Some practices and procedures have consequences so adverse and so easily apparent that prohibition is the only possible response. The consequences of other uses of technology, adverse or otherwise, are less obvious, or they are controllable through policy regulation. These include implications of the technologies for children's physical health, both immediately and in the long term, and the implications for children's emotional well-being. In cases where donated sperm or eggs are involved, new reproductive and genetic technologies also raise serious issues about the legal status of children.

The government by putting forward this legislation is proposing that some practices and procedures are so important for various reasons that there is no alternative than to prohibit them and to set criminal penalties for their use. Practices that turn children into commodities to be bought and sold are among them.

That is why for instance this legislation makes it a criminal offence to buy or to sell human sperm or eggs. Sperm and eggs are the building blocks of human life. To make them into commodities subject to the conditions of the market is to commodify children and to turn them into products. This is ultimately dehumanizing. It will affect in the long term the way we as a society value children and how we value human life.

Permitting payment for sperm and eggs also increases the possibility of health problems for the children who might be born as a result of these donations. Studies have shown that when a donation is made for payment, donors have less reason to be honest about the state of their health and about their genetic family history.

One study found much higher instances of HIV-positive donors among those who were paid than among those who donated on a purely voluntary basis. Men or women in financial need may be less likely to consider the welfare of others in responding to this financial incentive.

Commercial surrogacy arrangements go even further along this road to the commodification of children. Instead of sperm or eggs changing hands for money, it is a live baby. Those involved in the practice will assert that it is not the baby that is being sold but rather the reproductive services of a woman. Commercial surrogacy is simply the practice of paying a woman to give up her baby. We do not permit human beings to be bought and sold in any other context and it is an insult to children to allow this to continue.

I have heard from a significant number of constituents in my riding of Annapolis Valley—Hants regarding the issue of reproductive technology. Many constituents have written to my office or spoken with me personally on this matter. They have consistently expressed opposition to the commercial use of reproductive technologies. Our government has listened to these concerns and through this legislation it is responding.

• (1725)

This government is determined to remove the profit motive from pregnancy and birth. It has accordingly prohibited anyone from paying or offering to pay anyone to surrender a child or from acting as an intermediary in such an arrangement.

The prohibition on cloning is also justifiable in terms of its impact on the health of children. We simply do not know the health implications of creating large numbers of genetically identical people, either for individual children or for the population as a whole. The use of fetal eggs to create a human embryo could be harmful if they are from a miscarried fetus, since genetic disorders are one of the most frequent reasons for early miscarriage.

Practices such as commercial surrogacy arrangements, buying and selling of sperm or eggs, cloning, or using reproductive material from fetuses or dead people have no place in a society that claims to value children. The physical health of children can be severely affected in the short term by the use of new reproductive and genetic technologies for the simple reason that their use increases the likelihood of multiple births.

For example, 30 per cent of deliveries from in vitro fertilization are multiple: twins, triplets or even quadruplets. These babies are at a high risk of being born prematurely and of having a low birth weight. This can mean problems ranging from cerebral palsy and poor eyesight to short attention span and poor learning skills as these children grow up. In fact, Canadian and American studies have found that 20 to 25 per cent of low birth weight babies suffer from a form of serious disability and will continue to need attention and care in varying degrees for much of their lives.

### *Government Orders*

Other health effects of new reproductive technologies just simply are not known right now. They will not become apparent until enough children are tracked through the various developmental stages until they reach adulthood. This is why the advent of new technologies has to be treated with such caution.

Children are our country's most valuable asset. Our recognition of their value is found in Canada's signature on the United Nations declaration on the rights of children. They are so vulnerable to the decisions made by adults. Concern for children's health and well-being requires that their interests be a priority in making decisions about new reproductive and genetic technologies. The legislation before the House today has taken that perspective.

The government has prohibited activities that, by commercializing reproduction and reproductive materials, make children into commodities, products for sale on the market. It has prohibited activities whose impact on the future health of children is harmful. It has in other measures proposed to set in place mechanisms to ensure that all new reproductive and genetic technologies that are offered in Canada are provided with the interests and needs of children paramount so that children are treated with the care and respect that they deserve.

**The Speaker:** My colleagues, we only have one minute left in the debate.

[*Translation*]

We have an order of the House to proceed to the recorded vote at 5.30 p.m. Because of the ministerial statement we must add 17 minutes to the debate.

I am told that the 17 minutes will be lost because of the call of the bell. We have a government order with which we must proceed.

\* \* \*

### **BANKRUPTCY AND INSOLVENCY ACT**

The House resumed from October 22, 1996, consideration of the motion that Bill C-5, an act to amend the Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act, the Companies' Creditors Arrangement Act and the Income Tax Act, be read the third time and passed.

**The Speaker:** It being 5.30 p.m., the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred division on the motion at third reading of Bill C-5.

Call in the members.

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

## Government Orders

(Division No. 142)

## YEAS

## Members

Abbott  
Allmand  
Anderson  
Augustine  
Barnes  
Bellemare  
Bevilacqua  
Bonin  
Brushett  
Byrne  
Calder  
Catterall  
Chatters  
Cohen  
Cowling  
Dhaliwal  
Discepola  
Duncan  
Easter  
Epp  
Finestone  
Flis  
Forsyth  
Fry  
Gagliano  
Godfrey  
Graham  
Grubel  
Harb  
Harper (Churchill)  
Harvard  
Hickey  
Hopkins  
Ianno  
Irwin  
Kilger (Stormont—Dundas)  
Knutson  
Lastewka  
LeBlanc (Cape/Cap-Breton Highlands—Canso)  
Lincoln  
MacAulay  
MacLellan (Cape/Cap-Breton—The Sydneys)  
Maloney  
Marleau  
Mayfield  
McKinnon  
McWhinney  
Milliken  
Minna  
Murphy  
Nunziata  
Pagtakhan  
Parrish  
Payne  
Peters  
Pettigrew  
Proud  
Reed  
Richardson  
Robichaud  
Scott (Fredericton—York—Sunbury)  
Sheridan  
Solberg  
St. Denis  
Stewart (Northumberland)  
Szabo  
Terrana  
Valeri  
Verran  
Wappel  
Wells  
White (Fraser Valley West/Ouest)  
Wood  
Zed—147

Adams  
Anawak  
Assadourian  
Bakopanos  
Beaumier  
Bethel  
Bodnar  
Boudria  
Bryden  
Caccia  
Campbell  
Chan  
Clancy  
Coppes  
DeVillers  
Dingwall  
Duhamel  
Dupuy  
Eggleton  
Fewchuk  
Finlay  
Fontana  
Frazer  
Gaffney  
Gerrard  
Goodale  
Grey (Beaver River)  
Guarnieri  
Harper (Calgary West/Ouest)  
Harper (Simcoe Centre)  
Hermanson  
Hoepfner  
Hubbard  
Iftody  
Jackson  
Kirby  
Kraft Sloan  
Lavigne (Verdun—Saint-Paul)  
Lee  
Loney  
MacDonald  
Malhi  
Manley  
Massé  
McCormick  
McTeague  
Mifflin  
Mills (Red Deer)  
Mitchell  
Murray  
O'Reilly  
Paradis  
Patry  
Peric  
Peterson  
Phinney  
Ramsay  
Regan  
Ringma  
Schmidt  
Serré  
Skoke  
Speller  
Stewart (Brant)  
Strahl  
Telegdi  
Thompson  
Vanclief  
Walker  
Wayne  
Whelan  
Williams  
Young

## NAYS

## Members

Bachand  
Bellehumeur  
Bernier (Mégantic—Compton—Stanstead)  
Canuel  
Crête  
Davault  
Debien  
Dubé  
Dumas  
Gagnon (Québec)  
Godin  
Lalonde  
Langlois  
Lavigne (Beauharnois—Salaberry)  
Leblanc (Longueuil)  
Leroux (Shefford)  
Ménard  
Paré  
Sauvageau  
St-Laurent  
Tremblay (Rimouski—Témiscouata)  
Venne—43

Bélisle  
Bergeron  
Brien  
Chrétien (Frontenac)  
Dalphond-Guiral  
de Savoye  
Deshaies  
Duceppe  
Fillion  
Gauthier  
Guimond  
Landry  
Laurin  
Lebel  
Leroux (Richmond—Wolfe)  
Loubier  
Nunez  
Picard (Drummond)  
Solomon  
Tremblay (Lac-Saint-Jean)  
Tremblay (Rosemont)

## PAIRED MEMBERS

Alcock  
Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre/Sud-Centre)  
Caron  
Cullen  
Guay  
Jordan  
Lefebvre  
Mercier  
Pomerleau

Asselin  
Bernier (Gaspé)  
Comuzzi  
English  
Jacob  
Keyes  
McGuire  
Pillitteri  
Rocheleau

● (1755)

[English]

**Mr. Shepherd:** Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I was late for the vote. Had I been on time I would have voted with my party.

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

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

\* \* \*

## MANGANESE BASED FUEL ADDITIVES ACT

The House resumed from October 22 consideration of the motion that Bill C-29, an act to regulate interprovincial trade in and the importation for commercial purposes of certain manganese based substances, be read the third time and passed; and of the amendment.

**The Speaker:** The House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the amendment of the hon. member for Chicoutimi at the third reading stage on Bill C-29, an act to regulate interprovincial trade in and the importation for commercial purposes of certain manganese based substances.

*Government Orders*

• (1800 )

**Mr. Kilger:** Mr. Speaker, if the House agrees I would propose that you seek unanimous consent that members who voted on the previous motion be recorded as having voted on the motion now before the House, with Liberals voting nay, with the exception of the member for Fundy—Royal who had to leave.

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Dalphond-Guiral:** Mr. Speaker, the members of the official opposition will vote yes.

[*English*]

**Mr. Strahl:** Mr. Speaker, in deference to the new whip and at the risk of a two-minute delay of game, we are going to vote yes.

**Mr. Solomon:** Mr. Speaker, as the NDP whip, New Democratic members in the House will vote no on this motion.

**Mrs. Wayne:** Mr. Speaker, as House leader and party whip and anything else you want from me, I am voting in favour.

**Mr. Nunziata:** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to cast my ballot in support of the government's position.

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

*(Division No. 143)*

**YEAS**

Members

Abbott	Bachand
Bélisle	Bellehumeur
Bergeron	Bernier (Mégantic—Compton—Stanstead)
Brien	Canuel
Chatters	Chrétien (Frontenac)
Crête	Dalphond-Guiral
Davialt	de Savoye
Debien	Deshaies
Dubé	Duceppe
Dumas	Duncan
Epp	Fillion
Forseth	Frazer
Gagnon (Québec)	Gauthier
Godin	Grey (Beaver River)
Grubel	Guimond
Harper (Calgary West/Ouest)	Harper (Simcoe Centre)
Hermanson	Hoepfner
Lalonde	Landry
Langlois	Laurin
Lavigne (Beauharnois—Salaberry)	Lebel
Leblanc (Longueuil)	Leroux (Richmond—Wolfe)
Leroux (Shefford)	Loubier
Mayfield	Ménard
Mills (Red Deer)	Nunez
Nunziata	Paré
Picard (Drummond)	Ramsay
Ringna	Sauvageau
Schmidt	Solberg
St-Laurent	Strahl
Thompson	Tremblay (Lac-Saint-Jean)
Tremblay (Rimouski—Témiscouata)	Tremblay (Rosemont)
Venne	Wayne
White (Fraser Valley West/Ouest)	Williams—66

**NAYS**

Members

Adams	Allmand
Anawak	Anderson
Assadourian	Augustine
Bakopanos	Barnes
Beaumier	Bellemare
Bethel	Bevilacqua
Bodnar	Bonin
Boudria	Brushett
Bryden	Byrne
Caccia	Calder
Campbell	Catterall
Chan	Clancy
Cohen	Copps
Cowling	DeVillers
Dhaliwal	Dingwall
Discepolo	Duhamel
Dupuy	Easter
Eggleton	Fewchuk
Finestone	Finlay
Flis	Fontana
Fry	Gaffney
Gagliano	Gerrard
Godfrey	Goodale
Graham	Guarnieri
Harb	Harper (Churchill)
Harvard	Hickey
Hopkins	Hubbard
Ianno	Ifody
Irwin	Jackson
Kilger (Stormont—Dundas)	Kirkby
Knutson	Kraft Sloan
Lastewka	Lavigne (Verdun—Saint-Paul)
LeBlanc (Cape/Cap-Breton Highlands—Canso)	Lee
Lincoln	Loney
MacAulay	MacDonald
MacLellan (Cape/Cap-Breton—The Sydneys)	Malhi
Maloney	Manley
Marleau	Massé
McCormick	McKinnon
McTeague	McWhinney
Mifflin	Milliken
Minna	Mitchell
Murphy	Murray
O'Reilly	Pagtakhan
Paradis	Parrish
Patry	Payne
Peric	Peters
Peterson	Pettigrew
Phinney	Proud
Reed	Regan
Richardson	Robichaud
Scott (Fredericton—York—Sunbury)	Serré
Sheridan	Skoke
Solomon	St. Denis
Stewart (Brant)	Stewart (Northumberland)
Szabo	Telegdi
Terrana	Valeri
Vanclief	Verran
Walker	Wappel
Wells	Whelan
Wood	Young—122

**PAIRED MEMBERS**

Alcock	Asselin
Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre/Sud-Centre)	Bernier (Gaspé)
Caron	Comuzzi
Cullen	English
Guay	Jacob

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Jordan  
Lefebvre  
Mercier  
Pomerleau

Keyes  
McGuire  
Pillitteri  
Rocheleau

**The Speaker:** I declare the amendment defeated.

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## PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[English]

### SPEAKER'S RULING

**The Speaker:** I am now ready to rule on Motion M-1, standing in the name of the hon. member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell.

[Translation]

The hon. member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell has informed the Chair in writing that owing to his recent appointment to the ministry as Minister for International Cooperation and Minister responsible for the Francophonie, he is precluded from moving Private Member's Motion M-1 standing in his name in the order of precedence on the Order Paper.

[English]

Consequently, in accordance with the Speaker's duty under Standing Order 94(1)(a) to "make all arrangements necessary to ensure the orderly conduct of Private Members' Business" I am directing the Clerk to remove Motion M-1 from the Order Paper.

(Motion withdrawn.)

\* \* \*

● (1805)

### PEACEKEEPING

**Mr. Bob Mills (Red Deer, Ref.)** moved:

That, in the opinion of this House, all proposed peacekeeping or peace enforcement commitments involving more than 100 Canadian personnel should be put to a free vote in the House for approval or rejection.

He said: Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to rise on votable motion M-31 which provides Parliament the opportunity to address the important issue of peacekeeping. If passed, M-31 will ensure that members of the House are properly consulted whenever we send a large contingent of our men and women in uniform on dangerous missions abroad.

It reads:

That, in the opinion of this House, all proposed peacekeeping or peace enforcement commitments involving more than 100 Canadian personnel should be put to a free vote in the House for approval or rejection.

The reason my motion would only deal with missions involving 100 or more personnel is to allow the government sufficient

flexibility to deal with the kinds of small missions that come up from time to time such as observer missions, de-mining operations, election supervision, without requiring full parliamentary approval.

Motion M-31 is very simple and straightforward. There are no tricks here and what it all boils down to is this. As members of Parliament we have a responsibility to our country and to our troops. When soldiers from my riding or any member's riding are ordered to put their lives on the line, I want to know that all members of Parliament looked at all the facts and made the best decision regarding the mission and any questions arising from the mission.

It is not good enough that decisions are made by a few people behind closed doors. The Canadian people expect all of Parliament to face up to the responsibilities of sending our troops on these missions. When our soldiers go it must be a Canadian decision endorsed by the entire House of Commons. Before the decision to go or not to go is made, members of the House owe it to our soldiers to speak for them in a full debate and to cast their votes only after careful reflection.

I point back to the times over the past 10 years when Liberal members stood up to say much the same thing, that it was a total disregard of this House when soldiers were sent off on serious missions without first consulting them. The people in all of our ridings expect us to have been consulted and expect us to have an answer to the reasons why Canadian soldiers have gone on a peacekeeping mission.

Not only are modern peacekeeping missions more risky than they used to be but they are also much more expensive. The tab for our various missions runs into the billions of dollars. That is money coming straight out of the pockets of Canadians. We owe it to all citizens who are funding these missions to evaluate the facts and have a free vote before jumping in head first.

How many of us, in our ridings, have been asked why we are spending whatever the figure is on a particular mission? Our troops have done a great job but our voters deserve an answer from us.

The old way of simply handing over blank cheques to the UN is no longer acceptable. Canadians want accountability. Canadians want to know the risk and cost are worthwhile before the decision is made, and the only way to get all of the facts on the table is by a full parliamentary debate with a free vote at the end of it.

After that debate, the only way we possibly can show our accountability is through that vote. Then members can put their money where their mouths are and go on public record as supporting or not supporting a particular mission.

● (1810)

Since we are not only talking about a huge amount of money but the lives of our troops when we make this decision, it is vitally



important that members be able to vote their conscience or vote the wishes of their constituents. If ever there is a free vote on anything in the House it should be for peacekeeping. It should not be political. It should not in any way be partisan. It is an obvious item for a free vote. The lives and welfare of our soldiers cannot be a partisan matter. Similarly, it cannot be a situation where a whip instructs members how to vote. This is a life and death decision that must be left up to the elected members of the House to decide.

I realize that this is private member's hour so there is not a huge number of people here, but there are more people here now than when we have had some of our rather sham debates on peacekeeping missions that have occurred after hours.

Not all the facts were known at that time. The decisions in many cases had already been made and reported in the press. There was no opportunity for input of members to be incorporated into the government plans. There was no free vote. In fact there was no vote at all on any of these debates. No wonder there was so little interest by members. No wonder there was so little media attention. No wonder Canadians were not informed as they should have been. No wonder that when Canadians would ask members about the validity of the missions, those members were not able to give an answer.

Over the next few months two major peacekeeping missions are supposed to expire. All current indications show that these missions will be renewed. The blank cheques are already in the minister's hand. While I have no doubt that some mockery of consultation will occur, it will be what it has always been, a mirage, an image and a fraud on the Canadian public.

It does not have to be that way. I know there are members on all sides of the House who would dearly love to have some real input. They would love to discuss all of the facts in a full debate and then make a decision that is best for the country by means of a free vote.

In particular, I am thinking of the members of the foreign affairs and defence committees. I am thinking of members whose sons or daughters are in the military. I am thinking of members who have military bases in their ridings or members who are veterans. All of these members have something to contribute and it does not matter if they are Liberals, Bloc Quebecois, Reformers or New Democrats.

This debate is about the lives of our young people and the place our country has in the world. For many years peacekeeping has been a major factor of Canadian foreign policy. It is up to all of us as members of Parliament to take the responsibility seriously and speak to these motions.

I am pretty sure that the Liberal whip has already instructed some member opposite to give a speech saying something like this: "We appreciate the idea of the member for Red Deer and the

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Liberal Party is always concerned about peacekeeping and consulting with the public, but we do not support this motion". Then we will probably hear some convoluted explanation of why my motion is impractical or improper or unparliamentary, but it will be one of those things.

I think back to a motion a couple of years ago on access to information. Member after member got up and said that it was a great motion and it was just what the House needed for accountability but they were going to vote against it because the government was going to act on it and they would have action within the year. That was two years ago and there is still no action.

I urge whichever member has been chosen to give this speech to think twice before that member gives it. The member should think about his or her responsibility as a member of Parliament to represent his or her people back home, to promote the interests of the country and to support our troops. All of these things have to be more important than blindly serving the all knowing party brass.

I urge other Liberal members who have not had instructions from their whip to speak their minds freely. While they are doing this they should take inspiration from what has been said in the past by certain Liberal cabinet ministers. I am going to read a few quotes and I want the Liberal members here to hold their ministers to their words because their words support the principles behind M-31.

• (1815)

I will begin with the words of the Minister of Foreign Affairs: "I appreciate the co-operation of all parties in this new Parliament. This way, the people of Canada will be able to express their views to their elected representatives on an important foreign affairs issue. I also want to point out that today's consultation will not be the last on Canada's foreign policy". In this case he was talking about Haiti: "I promise that as far as possible, future debates will be held under better circumstances".

Since a fuller, more complete debate will be of benefit to Canadians, I can only assume that he would support M-31.

A second quote from the minister: "We have learned our lessons. We realize that when the United Nations takes on a role there must be proper and effective resources to meet the needs". Parliament should know if these resources are in place. If they are, then all the facts are laid on the table. And if they are not but the government is going ahead with the mission anyway, clearly the minister's words about having learned a lesson ring rather hollow.

A third quote: "I also brought the views of Canadians to bear by opening up this question on the Internet so we were able to ensure that Canadians from a wide variety of perspectives would let us know what their thoughts were". Obviously the minister is concerned about listening to people and obviously believing in representative democracy as other parties in the House do. They

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obviously believe that members of Parliament then should have their voice heard.

Another quote: "We still need and want the expressions of opinions of members of Parliament on what they think". Obviously the clearest way to get that is by a free vote in the House.

Finally, from the Minister of Foreign Affairs: "We are finding the solutions but we need to have the views of members of Parliament". From all these quotes one can see that the minister is saying we should have fuller debate with the facts available to all members so that they can make an educated decision on matters. This is exactly what Motion No. 31 states.

The foreign affairs minister is not the only cabinet minister who seemingly supports the principles of M-31. Let me turn now to some quotes from the former minister of national defence: "I think the hon. members from Red Deer and Charlevoix have raised very good points about getting a better handle on the cost before we go into these missions". Again, clearly the minister was stating he believes more parliamentary debate would be the way to get that information.

He goes on: "With respect to the rules of engagement, we have to be very sure that we know under what auspices we are operating there. We have had some unpleasant experiences before, one in Somalia, and we have learned a lot of lessons". Again I point out that he is strongly promoting the concept of M-31.

I think we will find as well that we have tried various experiments in our committees to make this work. In fact, we have moved a long way in looking at what we might do here.

A final quote from that minister: "The mandate has to be appropriate and achievable under the circumstances. We have to know the rules of engagement. We have to know what the ultimate force size and composition are". This is exactly the point. We have to know the facts, we have to have the briefing and we as members of Parliament have to feel good about what we do when we spend that money and risk those lives.

My conclusion from all of these statements is that it appears there would be strong cabinet support for M-31 based on what I have read and what I have heard in the House.

Time will tell whether those were hollow words or whether the ministers really meant those words about consultation on an issue as strongly felt by Canadians as peacekeeping.

Let me now turn to a discussion on one of those missions which will expire in a month, the Haiti mission. This is a perfect example of an ad hoc mission that is lurching from one crisis to the next. The mission is due to expire yet we have heard nothing about the

continued Canadian role in Parliament. Members are being kept in the dark. I expect a day or two before the debate we are going to have a rush debate in order to extend the mission for another six months.

● (1820)

Members of this House who are on the foreign affairs committee know that we were told this was just a six month extension, that most things should be under control by then and that we would in fact not be carrying on with the mission in likelihood come December of this year. Putting a band-aid on a bleeding artery is not going to solve anything.

The former minister of international co-operation in Haiti said Canada will prove its friendship and solidarity. It is very nice for the minister to say that and I am glad that he enjoys cutting backroom deals with foreign leaders while keeping the Canadian Parliament in suspense. I would like to remind this House that the Liberals used to cry bloody murder when the Mulroney Tories did the same thing. Although certain members of this cabinet have the Tory act fine tuned, it appears, I know that most members would agree that this should be openly discussed, openly debated and then let all members consult with their constituents and make that decision. M-31 would allow that to happen.

As far as Reform is concerned, we have to look at the Haiti mission and the facts again, much as we did before. We know the situations, we read the reports about what is happening there. We know that illiteracy is still at 85 per cent and unemployment at 80 per cent plus. We know that Mr. Aristide is waiting in the wings. We know there has been no great progress in democratization. We know that there are under 100 rich families adding nothing back to that country. We know that expatriates are not encouraged to invest in the country.

Canadians need to know more. What are the benefits, the long term solutions and is there a long term plan? We in the House of Commons can put forward such a plan to look at a country like Haiti. It is in our hemisphere. We can come up with a solution, maybe it will take 20 or 30 years, but we have to at least give a chance.

This is the kind of thing that this House can do. This House can put forward a long term solution, one that Canadians will understand, one that all of us will understand and together we will agree on it. This last minute two hour debate rushed through the day before is not a solution to solving these sorts of peacekeeping problems.

Maybe the solution is to go to the OAS to begin the democracy, to say to the 31 other countries it is time that we took the responsibility. It is in our hemisphere, it is causing us problems, let

us take it. Let us at least come up with another solution, not just a band-aid that probably will not work.

Within this House we have the capability, the brain power, the thoughtfulness, the intelligence, all these adjectives, where we could actually create something better for ourselves. If there is any area, foreign affairs has to be that area where we can be non-partisan, where we can look at a solution with long term benefits for all of us.

We should get unanimous consent for this bill. We should all be able to agree to it. My constituents will be happy if I am working for the good of the country, not for the good of my party, not for the good of partisan positions but one showing co-operation, leadership and using members of Parliament to the best advantage of this House.

• (1825)

**Mr. Francis G. LeBlanc (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to participate in this debate as Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs but also as a member of foreign affairs and international trade committee who has participated with the hon. member for Red Deer and others in debate on the question of Canada's peacekeeping missions, notably the most recent one in Haiti.

I want to begin by challenging the premise of the motion which is that unless there is a free vote in this House as is specified by the motion, Canada's role in peacekeeping missions is not debated by parliamentarians, that no debate has taken place.

That is manifestly not the case. With the committee of which the member is a part, we have been in the process of attempting to find a realistic way of obtaining the views of parliamentarians who are interested in the question of peacekeeping to provide good, timely and sound advice to the government on the question of renewal of peacekeeping missions and on the question of new peacekeeping missions.

In addition to that, we have been attempting to say that somehow because the debate occurs near the end of a given mission on the question of renewing that mission there has been no work done to bring the issue to the stage at which it is brought for debate is again a false presumption.

As the member knows, in dealing with issues that give rise to peacekeeping missions the international environment is changing all the time. At some point, with the facts at our disposal it is appropriate to have a discussion to get reasonable advice from members of Parliament on all sides of the House. That is what this government has been attempting to do, particularly the Minister of Foreign Affairs, using the resources of Parliament.

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This continues to be the policy of this government and it will continue to be the policy of this government. Whenever possible and necessary, the House's opinion will be sought prior to Canadian troops being sent overseas.

In the international context, however, the Government of Canada must be able to act. More important, the government must be able to act quickly. This requires flexibility. Canada has been at the forefront of international peacekeeping policy for the past 40 years.

At the 50th United Nations general assembly in 1995, the previous minister of foreign affairs, the hon. Andre Ouellet, presented the Canadian study toward a rapid reaction capability for the United Nations.

It recognized that a faster response by the United Nations in times of crisis was required in today's world. The UN cannot act without the support of leading peacekeeping nations such as Canada.

This motion establishes a rigid process and risks tying the hands of the Government of Canada when the international community seeks our assistance. It does not recognize that each peacekeeping mission is distinct and must be treated as such.

It does not recognize the importance that Canadians and the international community place in our peacekeepers. Because of that, the motion does not receive the support of this government.

[*Translation*]

In normal circumstances, when a peacekeeping mission is being launched, reviewed or renewed, debate is encouraged, and the House is asked to support the initiative. However, there may be exceptional cases in the future in which time is of the essence. It may be necessary to react quickly in order to avert a disaster.

In these conditions, the government cannot be slowed down by a bill requiring a vote in the House before Canadian troops can be deployed. The government must be able to quickly send Canadian troops where they are needed. A requirement to hold a vote in the House would prevent the government from doing its duty. This could take time we do not have in these situations.

[*English*]

The face of peacekeeping and peace operations in general is changing. The world community does not always wait for a stable environment before intervening.

The United Nations and other international bodies now act to prevent conflicts from starting and to keep them from spreading. They deploy troops while fighting continues when there is no peace to keep. The focus is now on action rather than reaction. In order to fulfil its role as a pre-eminent peacekeeper, Canada must be able to act quickly and decisively when asked to do so. A conflict can escalate in a matter of weeks if not days. A ceasefire can

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deteriorate or a town can be destroyed. The intervention of peacekeeping troops can help to prevent a situation from disintegrating into a tragedy.

• (1830)

[*Translation*]

We hope the world learned valuable lessons from peacekeeping operations like the one in Rwanda. It is no longer possible to stand back and do nothing. We must step in to avert a tragedy before the situation gets out of hand. Waiting for order to be restored in an area is no longer a viable solution.

Peacekeepers must sometimes be deployed somewhere on very short notice. If the situation is dangerous, they are asked to stop violence while it is occurring or before it starts and not after the harm has been done. We must respond to the horror of ethnic massacres with vigorous measures. Canada must play its part in helping to maintain the safety and security we as a people value so much.

This motion would prevent Canada from taking action. Our peacekeepers are considered to be among the best in the world. That is why the international community relies on Canada to participate in almost every UN mission. The word "Canadian" has become synonymous with peacekeeper. One of our Prime Ministers, the Right Hon. Lester B. Pearson, was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for coming up with the concept of peacekeeping. In 1988, the peacekeepers themselves received a medal in recognition of their services.

If we cannot respond to UN calls for help, other countries will start questioning Canada's commitment to this organization, and therefore its relevance as a peacekeeping tool.

If we chose to ignore the United Nations' demands, then many other countries will question the confidence they have put in this organization. We must not let this happen. When the UN and the international community call, we must answer. We must be able to react on very short notice, if required.

[*English*]

Peacekeepers have taken on more aggressive roles in peace enforcement but they have also accepted the hat of humanitarian relief workers. Not only do United Nations soldiers separate warring parties, now they must also feed, shelter and protect the civilian populations.

A prime example of this is the new Disaster Assistance Response Team, DART. It is designed to begin the deployment of its 180 members to a humanitarian disaster within 48 hours. The team will provide the infrastructure necessary for UN organizations or non-governmental organizations to follow in the coming weeks. In the interim, DART will provide medical and structural support for the surrounding community.

This could not happen if there was a postponement due to a required debate within the House. A situation could decay just as

rapidly in a humanitarian emergency as it can in times of armed conflict. The delay could cost the lives of hundreds of innocent people. It could even make deploying the force impossible.

If they had arrived according to schedule, then the force may avert further disaster. Canada must be in a position to stop a tragedy from developing. If we are capable of doing this let us not be entangled by unnecessary legislative requirements when people are dying. Let us not create reasons why we cannot help those who need our assistance in order to survive. Let us not antagonize and shame the Canadian people.

[*Translation*]

Canada would lose its status as a leader among countries providing peacekeeping troops if it could not react when the help of Canadian men and women is requested. Last year, Canada released a study entitled "Towards a Rapid Reaction Capability for the United Nations".

We have seen in the past that reacting quickly is a must in a crisis situation. With this report, Canada is now providing a model for the future.

I realize that my speaking time is up. I will therefore wrap up quickly. The government agrees that a debate on our commitments should be held either in this House or before the Parliament of Canada.

• (1835)

It is quite another story to ask that there be a vote before Canada can make any commitment, every time Canada makes a commitment, for the reasons I stated in my remarks.

**Mr. Pierre Brien (Témiscamingue, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I too am going to speak to Motion M-31 introduced by the Reform Party member, the purpose of which is to give Parliamentarians a greater voice when Canada sends soldiers to take part in United Nations peacekeeping operations.

It is very laudable to give Parliament a greater say in these decisions. Nonetheless, there are some changes we would like to see made to the proposal. As for the substance of this proposal, I think it is desirable to involve parliamentarians in debates of this importance.

We know that, on a number of occasions, this has already happened. Emergency debates have been held to back decisions which, in some cases, had been taken, or were to be taken, to send Canadian soldiers to take part in peacekeeping operations. At the conclusion of my speech, I will propose an amendment to this proposal.

Many people in our ridings and in our families have a connection with the armed forces; we all have such people in our ridings. Some members have military bases or other military installations in their ridings. The number of people involved in the military across the country is large. In debates such as these, therefore, we can

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represent our constituents, who share with us their views and opinions when we see them at various events and meetings.

The Bloc Québécois has already made its views on this subject known in its dissenting report on Canada's foreign policy, tabled in November 1994 after the election. I am going to read you parts of this report. The last paragraph deals specifically with the subject of the motion put by the member of the Reform Party.

The Bloc Québécois said that "it considers that one of the primary roles of the Canadian Forces on the international scene must be to support peacekeeping operations by taking an active part in them. Canada's willingness to help keep the peace is one of its most important attributes and a major international achievement. However, in the future Canada will have to define more precise criteria for its interventions.

The costs and complexity of intervention will require a new attitude on the part of the international community: the events in Rwanda and Bosnia are eloquent evidence of this. Canada must learn from the experience of all these peacekeeping missions. The recent case of Haiti is a reminder of the need to base our intervention on democratic legitimacy and rigorous planning. In the future, mission objectives and orders will have to be carefully established, under the aegis of the United Nations". I continue: "Although in agreement with the majority report's recommendation on the necessity of giving the Canadian Forces a special configuration, since the credibility of our intervention depends on this, the Bloc Québécois wishes to spell out the direction that Canada should take in this area. First, we think that Canada should rethink its current military alliances—NATO and NORAD—so that their strategic missions reflect the UN's needs".

"This approach would bring new vitality to these organizations and update their usefulness in security maintenance and conflict resolution, while enabling Canada to achieve the collective security goals that are crucial for its own territorial security. In addition, we consider that Canada should encourage the setting-up of a permanent contingent available to the UN for its peacekeeping missions abroad. We further think that Canada should set a ceiling on the human resources it is prepared to devote to peacekeeping. For example, it could limit the number of military personnel committed to peacekeeping missions at any one time to a maximum of 2,000 to 2,500".

This is what we said earlier. There are now close to 2,000 Canadian peacekeepers abroad. These soldiers are generally sent on a mission for a six-month mandate, so there is a rotation.

We concluded as follows: "And lastly, Canada should submit any decision to participate in peacekeeping missions to a vote in the House of Commons, as rapidly as possible, where time allows".

• (1840)

That is the context in which we want to propose an amendment. I want to say here that peacekeeping is currently one of the main areas of activity of our armed forces. I do not think that anyone is under the impression that, overnight, Canada will be facing any threat of invasion. Our role, as a country, is therefore much more to provide personnel to contribute to the peacekeeping and peacemaking effort around the world.

In fact, any review of DND activities should always be carried out in a similar frame of mind, looking to allocate a larger portion of the budget to peacekeeping missions, which are important missions, while at the same time assuming a role that may be very useful at home and in terms of operations of a more civilian nature. That being said, savings could certainly be made by managing along these lines.

The Bloc Québécois policy, as set out in this report, has not changed. A number of options are discussed as far as possible positions regarding UN missions.

As for the amendment, I would like to point out that, in its present form, it refers to a number of peacekeepers. A figure like 100 is rather restrictive. The opportunity of this figure could be questioned. It is always difficult to set an arbitrary number. The other question is: what would we do in the event of a major crisis, a crisis erupting somewhere on the international scene, in any given country, on July 31, August 2 or December 27? According to the wording of the other motion, we would have to call an emergency session of Parliament, with the delays that would entail.

To ensure that a decision may be made in any event, and later approved by Parliament, we will submit in a moment an amendment introducing a degree of flexibility in the process, while ensuring however that, should this occur, if the government decided to send troops and contribute to a peacekeeping force over the summer or any other time when the House is in recess, immediately upon its return, the decision would be put to a vote in Parliament.

You will tell me: "Yes, but the personnel have already been sent". Even so, if Parliament decided that it was not necessary, we could go back on the decision and not renew the mandate at the end of the six month term, or withdraw the peacekeepers, not immediately of course, because replacements would have to be found, and we do have commitments to honour within the United Nations.

So that would influence matters somewhat. It would mean a public debate could be held on the subject, people from various sectors could express their points of view, and if the government, in the view of the opposition parties, had not made the right decision, this would be the time to say so. But it would allow more flexibility, it would not have the disadvantage of having to

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convene an emergency session of Parliament. That is why our amendment will introduce a little more flexibility in this regard.

I would like to say, while I am on the topic, however, that I would like to see our troops receive more training before being sent outside the country, so that they will have a better understanding of the stakes involved, which are often political, economic or social, in order to be able to represent us with dignity.

Many people have done extraordinary things during their posting. It only takes a few unfortunate incidents like those in Somalia, for example, or elsewhere to ruin the reputation it has taken years to build. We must therefore step up our efforts to train these people before they set out, to ensure that they have a clear understanding of the work they will be doing, and that they represent us well. I think we have some way to go, and we must avoid any more events like those that took place in Somalia.

In conclusion, I propose as follows:

That the motion be amended by deleting all the words after the word "all" and substituting the following:

"projects of military commitments abroad involving Canadian troops must, as soon as possible, be the subject of a vote in the House in order to recommend their approval or rejection to the government".

This would satisfy the objectives I have just mentioned. I would like to table this amendment.

• (1845)

**The Speaker:** This amendment is in order.

[*English*]

I see we have about 18 minutes left. It is my intention to recognize the hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands and the hon. member for Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke.

**Mr. Jack Frazer (Saanich—Gulf Islands, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to speak to Motion No. M-31 which would give members of Parliament the opportunity to register their constituents' approval or disapproval of Canadian involvement in major peacekeeping missions.

I am astounded and I wonder which planet the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs has been living on when he makes remarks about how this motion would preclude Canada from acting rapidly in response to a situation. When pray tell has he ever seen the UN operate with such speed?

Furthermore, I was astounded to hear the member from the Bloc asking what if it is on Boxing Day or what if it is on New Year's Day? When we are sending real live red-blooded Canadians into a

harmful situation, putting them in danger, surely it is the responsibility of the people in this House to be able to respond and come back no matter when it is, in the middle of summer or whenever. It is our responsibility to come back here and debate whether or not it is appropriate to send our people to that deployment. Surely holidays should not enter into it. Input from parliamentarians is required if they are to fulfil their obligations to Canada, to the Canadian forces and to their constituents.

The people in the Canadian forces are the only ones in our society who are committed to laying down their lives on order when they are in a combat situation. No one else is required to do that. We are obligated to take account of that and ensure that when we send them somewhere, it is appropriate that they go there, that they are properly equipped and so on.

I will provide examples of mistakes. Look at when we sent our forces to UNPROFOR in the former Yugoslavia. What was the mandate? Nobody knew. How were they equipped? Inadequately. We know that. How did they exist there? Very very poorly. They were stranded. They were held hostage. Everything was wrong with that mission, yet there is no question they did magnificently under the situation, under the conditions that were imposed. But we did not do our homework when we sent them there.

How many Canadians are aware that when we sent our troops to Somalia they did not go as peacekeepers, they went as peacemakers? They were to restore order there. At the time that land was inhabited by warlords who drove around in jeeps and other vehicles equipped with big machine guns. They attacked anybody they could to take away their supplies and goods. Our people went there to restore order and they did a good job of it.

When we deploy our troops overseas, what items do we need to discuss, to approve and disapprove? First we need to find out what the problem is. What has caused the situation to arise? What is needed to resolve it? What sort of force is required to take action on it? What action has already been taken? What have they tried? Has it worked or not? Has it partially worked?

Is there a willingness on the part of the people who are in the situation to resolve the situation? Do they want to achieve a peaceful solution? Are peacekeepers in general welcome? Do they want somebody to intrude into their affairs to try to rectify the problem or cool it down? More important for Canadians, are Canadian peacekeepers welcome? Would they be the ones who would be welcomed in to try to resolve the situation?

Next we would want to know the composition of the force. How big is it? How is it to be equipped? What skills should that force have to accomplish the mission? Are the Canadian forces able to accept this commitment within their present restrictions and resources? Do they have the right personnel? Do they have enough personnel? Do they have the proper equipment? If they do not, we have no business sending them into that area.

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• (1850)

We should also know how many and what other nations are involved. What sort of involvement do they have? How many troops are they sending?

What is the command and control? This is one of the most vitally important things we have to resolve before we commit Canadian troops to an action. How are they going to be commanded? Who is in charge? And what recourse do we have to that command and control centre? What are the logistics? Who is looking after providing the requirements to keep our troops active and mobile in the field?

When is the force to be there? How soon does it have to arrive and once it is there, how long is it to be committed? Do we know exactly what it is our troops are being asked to do? Do we have a very clear idea of what it is they must do to resolve the situation? Because if they do not, then we should not be sending them there. It is something we should be deciding in the House.

If they are deployed under UN auspices, what access does Canada have to influence the decisions that are made with regard to things involving our troops? Does Canada have the right to approach the security council or whoever is in charge to ensure that Canadian interests are addressed? If they do not, I do not think we should approve it. We should say: "No way". If we are sending our troops down there, we should have a right to involve ourselves in what is being decided for them.

One of the most important things is the rules of engagement. What amount of force are our people allowed to use? Under what circumstances can they use it? What are the rules governing the whole deployment? Are they adequate? If they are not, again we have to say that is not good enough, that we need better for our troops.

Because of our debt situation obviously we have to be conscious of the cost. We have to know how much it is going to cost. It is also important that we find out who is going to bear the cost. If it is to be paid for by Canada, which ministry is going to pay for it? Would it be defence? Defence gets hit pretty often. Should it be foreign affairs? Is there another agency that should be contributing to this?

What about the other people who are involved? What are they contributing, not only by way of forces but in support, in money? Are they assisting Canada? Are they supporting Canada, or is Canada paying for a disproportionate amount of the involvement in the deployment?

MPs are obligated to know the facts. We should discuss them and we should be willing to come to this place at short notice any time that we are contemplating deploying Canadians into a dangerous situation. I believe that in such a situation it should be a non-partisan decision. The parties should not be involved in it. Obviously,

the government has to take the final decision, but the government should listen to what is going on.

The debates we have had until now have been meaningless with no votes. They have been very, very close. In one case, two days before the mission was to be renewed, we were debating it here in the House and there was no vote at the end of it. Obviously, the decision had been taken before that debate took place. This is not appropriate nor adequate.

I believe, if my memory serves me correctly, the IFOR mission in Yugoslavia is up for renewal on December 20 this year. So far we have had no sign that there will be any sort of a meaningful parliamentary debate on whether to renew that commitment or not. It seems that since we are approaching the end of October we should be debating that. It is not fair to the people who are committed there for us to say at the last minute that we are not going to play. Surely to gosh we should give them a couple of weeks' or at least one month's notice that Canada unfortunately will not be able to continue with it.

In this aspect perhaps at the moment our army troops have been over committed to a number of things. Serious consideration should be given to making the Canadian support to IFOR an air support, a fighter squadron. This would be meaningful and would have a lot of punch. It would give the army time to regroup, to recover, to get back into training and to establish relations again with their families.

• (1855)

If this Parliament does not have the intelligence, the capability and the moral courage to address this situation, then it is a lot less of an establishment than I believe it to be. This motion should pass.

**Mr. Leonard Hopkins (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in speaking to this motion today, I begin by pointing out that what this motion offers is in absolute keeping with the Canadian peacekeeping policy process. In fact it supports the philosophy which guides our present policy.

It has been and will continue to be the policy of this government to bring before this House all issues relating to peacekeeping. When it has been possible and necessary, that is exactly what this government has done. We recognize the importance of full and free discussion of any proposed deployment of Canadian forces personnel and we attach great value to the opinion which this House has to offer.

It is for these reasons this government has endeavoured to allow for the debate of Canada's peacekeeping commitments at every opportunity. Therefore the apparent objective of this motion to generate discussion and debate of Canada's peacekeeping commitments has already been accomplished by this government.

*Private Members' Business*

I note here that we have heard a lot about non-partisan debate from the Reform Party spokespeople tonight. In this House, foreign affairs used to be quite non-debatable and people came to a consensus. It is rather ironic that the spokespersons for the Reform Party were on their feet asking for non-partisanship and at the same time were castigating Liberals in past debates in this House.

Motion No. M-31 calls for a free vote in the House. Our government is derived from the system in Great Britain, the mother of Parliaments. It is called responsible government. Under our parliamentary system responsible government means that the government of the day must make the decisions. Decisions have to be made and sometimes as has been stated they have to be made quickly.

We cannot compare this with the way the United Nations makes decisions because we are in the throes of trying to upgrade and modernize the United Nations and streamline its procedures and that is the right way to go. The way debates are handled in this House, decisions on foreign affairs or any other major events have to be made by a responsible government in the long run. That government is the one that has to live with the decisions.

While we are talking about peacekeeping, peacemaking and what should be done in Parliament prior to a force going wherever to smooth things out, let me emphasize to the greatest degree the appreciation we should have as Canadians for the members of the Canadian forces who go out and do Canada proud around the world. Canadians respond responsibly. Yes there have been a few hiccups along the way, but the hiccups totally disappear when we consider the positive contribution our Canadian forces have made to world affairs and indeed right here at home when disasters occur.

Think back to World War I and World War II and how Canada acted. Why did Canada act? Because there was no United Nations to bring countries together to make decisions. Everybody was drifting off in their own direction and we drifted into World War I and we drifted into World War II. That is why at the end of World War II the UN was founded. Then when the communists started becoming more and more aggressive during the cold war period of the late 1940s, NATO was established, another group of nations coming together for help. That did not exist in the earlier days.

• (1900)

Korea, the first test of the United Nations peacekeeping, was a very successful test in that the United Nations forced the North Koreans back to the 38th parallel.

Canada took part in the Persian Gulf war. It has been into peacekeeping and peacemaking of all kinds over the years. Then there is aid to the civilian power by our Canadian forces.

I want to say here what a debt we owe to those Canadian forces who participated in aid to the civilian power during the Saguenay River disaster. The words of a person who lost their home, lost everything, when he came up to the Prime Minister in the Saguenay area when he visited there were: "Mr. Prime Minister, the Canadian forces have been with us since day one. We don't know what we would have done without them. They have been marvellous".

When we see all this hype about Canadian forces today and all the negative things occurring, let us give those men and women out there a pat on the back. Let us tell them that Canadians should be giving them the credit they deserve for the wonderful work they are doing. The other problems go into insignificance.

Those young families sitting out there tonight may be watching this debate. They have to be thanked, the rank and file of the Canadian Armed Forces who are the very basis of what we are talking about today.

Just to back up what I have been saying, the recent event that supposedly occurred in Hungary with four Canadian soldiers, remember the headlines the first day: "Canadian soldiers assaulted couple, Hungary police say", headlines in a Hungarian newspaper.

After the investigation was made, they found that reports of Canadian soldiers attacking a Hungarian civilian and his girl friend were exaggerated, as Hungarian journalists in the Canadian military now say.

In fact, information indicates that one of the Canadians was himself beaten up in a street fight. Then the editor of the largest Budapest daily newspaper said Monday that the story his paper published on the weekend was not entirely accurate.

I want to thank the Ottawa *Citizen* for correcting that story. While we castigate the media, when it does admit a mistake and comes forward and corrects a story, it deserves our thanks as well.

I want to emphasize that while we are sending our Canadian troops into all areas of the world, into all kinds of different cultures, different languages, different geographical conditions, different transportation conditions to do a job, for heaven's sake, let the rest of us here at home get behind the spirit of the Canadian forces and give them the boost they deserve.

They are an institution of this country, and a proud one. I want to underscore that tonight while I am on my feet. This country since the very conception of peacekeeping has been an international leader in the field.

Canada's pre-eminence in peacekeeping has resulted from a willingness to act in times of crisis. Indeed it has been our willingness to become involved and our ability to do so quickly that has won us the acclaim and admiration of the entire international community.



This is not to say that this government opposes debate. On the contrary, we recognize that debate is essential, especially when the men and women of the Canadian Armed Forces may be put in harm's way.

Debate on important peacekeeping issues is crucial and the opinion of this House is valued.

• (1905)

That is where this government stands. We have had debates on these issues in the past. There will continue to be debates in the House, but I want to underscore that it is the government of the day that must make the final decision. It is the one which is going to be held accountable, so it will make the decision. If we are going to have responsible democracy in Canada we have to have a responsible government. That means that members of the government respect the government which they support.

**The Speaker:** The time provided for the consideration of Private Members' Business has now expired and the order is dropped to the bottom of the order of precedence on the Order Paper.

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## ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

[*English*]

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

### BOSNIAN ELECTIONS

**Mr. Bill Graham (Rosedale, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise this evening to raise again a question which I originally raised with the Minister of Foreign Affairs respecting the role of our election supervisors or election observers in Bosnia.

At that time I asked the minister if he would be good enough to respond to the concerns which Canadians had as to what the role of our observers actually was in an election of that nature and the response was given by the Secretary of State for Latin America and Africa. She pointed out the important role that our observers have played in that particular community.

In following this up tonight I think it is worth reminding members of the House and members of the public of the very important role that our observers play in local elections. I have not had an opportunity to do this, but as chairman of the foreign affairs committee I get regular reports on this form of activity and have often had the opportunity to observe the role that Canadian parliamentarians and others have played not only in Bosnia but in Nicaragua, in Palestine and in many other countries where there are really serious concerns about the credibility of the election process.

It is appropriate that my opportunity to follow up on this issue comes this evening on the heels of the debate which has taken place

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on peacekeeping. In many ways the role that our observers play in this type of activity is very similar to the role that our troops play in peacekeeping. They are there to ensure the credibility of the democratic process. They are there to ensure that peace will be maintained in the region because there will be elections which will replace the need for violence.

This is an extraordinarily important process and it is important for us to be assured by the ministry that our observers are actually performing the role which they are called upon to do and are able to do it.

I ask the parliamentary secretary for the minister if he would be good enough to elaborate on the role that our observers play. I would like him to tell us what the prospects are for peace, particularly in Bosnia, in the former Yugoslavia, now that these elections have been held. What can we see from the fruits of all the labours of our observers and peacekeepers? What can the parliamentary secretary tell us about the present prospects?

In particular, I would ask him if he is able to comment on a recent suggestion by the president of the war crimes tribunal, which is seeking to bring to justice potential war criminals in the former Yugoslavia. The president of that tribunal has actually gone so far as to say that he is considering resigning from his post. He is concerned about the integrity of the process of that tribunal because of its failure to actually bring before the tribunal many of the accused. Some 74 persons have been accused and only seven people have been arraigned before the tribunal because many of the accused are still in the former Yugoslavia, still unassailable, still inaccessible and cannot be brought to justice.

• (1910)

I would like to take this opportunity to invite the parliamentary secretary to elaborate some more on the answer which was given before and assure the House that the role of our observers is an important one, that they have achieved success in the former Yugoslavia and that there is now ongoing opportunity for peace in that region, including justice to be served by the international tribunal.

**Mr. Francis G. LeBlanc (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for Rosedale for his interest in this issue.

Indeed Canada can be proud of its key contribution to the technical organization to the elections that were held in Bosnia on September 14. Voting took place in a positive, non-violent fashion, free of systematic obstruction. The elections constituted an essential and reasonably democratic first step toward institution building and democratization in Bosnia.

Twenty-two Canadian electoral experts were seconded to the OSCE mission in Bosnia, many in senior positions. Canada also contributed to the larger international effort to supervise and observe the elections in Bosnia. We provided to the OSCE 15

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election supervisors and 30 election observers. Another 32 Canadians engaged with the UN also helped supervise the elections.

Mr. Izatbegovic has been confirmed as the chair of the new three-person presidency of Bosnia. We congratulate all three members of the new presidency and encourage them to move quickly once the other election results are confirmed to put in place the common institutions established by the Dayton peace agreement and to implement all aspects of the agreement.

Canada is committed to helping the parties face the enormous challenge of this post-election consolidation period. We will do so through our engagement in the peace implementation process, our IFOR contribution and through our reconstruction program in the former Yugoslavia.

Canada participates fully in international efforts to ensure a lasting peace to the conflict in the former Yugoslavia and to provide relief to its victims. Since the signing of the peace agreement for Bosnia and Hercegovina and the agreement on the peaceful reintegration of Serb controlled territory in Croatia, Canada has focused its efforts on promoting security as well as social and economic rehabilitation.

Since January 1996 Canada has maintained about 1,000 troops in Bosnia and Hercegovina as part of the NATO led peace implementation force, IFOR.

Canada's humanitarian assistance to the victims of the conflicts amounted to over \$65 million between 1991 and 1995. These funds purchased and delivered food, medical supplies, clothing and shelter. The Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister for International Co-operation announced in April 1996 that Canadian reconstruction assistance would total up to \$40 million this year.

Finally, on the issue of war crimes, Canada has consistently led and supported efforts to investigate and prosecute cases involving war crimes in the former Yugoslavia.

## CANADA PENSION PLAN

**Mr. Svend J. Robinson (Burnaby—Kingsway, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I rise to follow up on a question that I asked in this House in late September prior to a meeting of federal and provincial finance ministers on the Canada pension plan.

I urged the government at that time not to rush into changes to the Canada pension plan but rather to take the time to consult seriously and study more carefully the impact of its regressive proposals and look at progressive changes to the CPP instead of hitting the most vulnerable beneficiaries of the system.

Many Canadians believe that the CPP is in a state of crisis, that it will soon be bankrupt. Nothing could be further from the truth. The CPP was established in 1966 as a publicly administered socially insurance program. It is funded entirely by contributions from employers and employees. There is no government funding. It has had a significant impact on reducing poverty among the elderly. It is a pay as you go plan which has been strongly endorsed by the chief actuary of Canada who says: "It provides all the flexibility needed to avoid bankruptcy".

Because of the weak economy and the high levels of unemployment and bankruptcy the level of contributions has been lower than anticipated and disability claims up to 1994 were higher, although since then they have dropped dramatically. Thus there is certainly a need to readjust the level of contributions from both employers and employees to ensure future viability. This review process is built already into the CPP.

Instead of looking at how we can strengthen and improve the CPP, in particular to enhance the level of benefits of the lowest income seniors, the Liberal government aided and abetted by the Reform Party and its right wing allies in the Fraser Institute and the *Globe and Mail* is laying the groundwork to attack the fundamental principles of the CPP.

• (1915)

In February, the Liberals issued a so-called information paper. It was full of distortion and inaccuracies. It ignored some proposals for improving the CPP and took as a given that benefits must be cut. Indeed, the Liberal MP for Winnipeg North Centre, who chaired the rushed consultations, suggested that current benefits be cut for CPP beneficiaries. There was absolutely no analysis of the disproportionate impact of the proposed cuts on women despite evidence that it would be women who would be most hurt.

The Reform Party has suggested that we abolish the CPP and instead adopt the model proposed by Chilean dictator Augusto Pinochet: individual private RRSPs for everyone. This would destroy income security for millions of elderly Canadians and eliminate the many advantages of the CPP.

I urge the government to stop this rush to weaken the CPP and instead examine ways that public pensions can be strengthened. This is all the more important when an increasing number of Canadians are working at part time, temporary and contractual labour with no workplace pensions. Certainly RRSPs are not the answer. Too many Canadians simply cannot afford to save and more and more are cashing them in.

The New Democrat governments of B.C. and Saskatchewan have opposed cuts in benefits and have suggested that along with a modest increase in contributions, the federal and provincial gov-

ernments consider increasing the maximum level of earnings subject to contributions. This has also been proposed by the National Council on Welfare.

Finally, I want to urge the government to listen with care to people with disabilities and their spokespeople. They are deeply concerned about the impact of cuts in federal transfer payments, the elimination of the Canada assistance plan and the impact that has on disability programs. There are already totally unacceptable lengthy delays in adjudication of Canada pension plan disability claims. We understand that there may be even more cuts in the number of officers working in this area. Some individuals, including those with fibromyalgia, complain of serious problems in the present process.

Therefore, let no one suggest that disability programs under the CPP be weakened or cut. People with disabilities are too often already living below the poverty line.

In conclusion, I urge the Liberal government to strengthen the Canada pension plan and reinforce its basic principles instead of heeding the right wing voices that would destroy it. As well, the government should help to educate Canadians about the strengths of the CPP and help to rebut the distortions and myths that have given rise to a lack of confidence in the future viability of the plan.

Canadian seniors have sacrificed much for my generation through the depression and two world wars. They deserve dignity in retirement. They deserve economic security. I trust that will be the objective of the review of the Canada pension plan.

**Mr. Barry Campbell (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the hon. member for his question. Unfortunately, he is a little bit misinformed.

The federal government is certainly not trying to push through a package of cuts to the CPP. It is not trying to destroy the CPP but rather make sure it is there for all of us.

Responsibility for the CPP is shared among the provinces and the federal government. Changes to the CPP require the agreement of two-thirds of the provinces with two-thirds of the population.

The government has been working with the provinces to find balanced changes which both provinces and the federal government can accept to ensure that the CPP is fair and sustainable for current and future generations.

The hon. member also alleges that the federal government has not consulted with Canadians on the CPP. Nothing could be further from the truth. The government and all provinces agreed to a consultation paper which was released last February.

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The federal government and all provinces held extensive consultations across the country from mid-April to mid-June. The federal government and all provinces released a report on the consultations in June.

It may be that the hon. member has not read the report and is not aware of what ordinary Canadians think of the CPP. The federal government is continuing to work to find a package of balanced changes which all provinces, including British Columbia and Saskatchewan, can accept. The goal is sustainability and fairness, listening to Canadians' concerns about the CPP and responding with a package of changes that ensure it is there for all of us.

• (1920)

[*Translation*]

### THE JOFFRE SHOP

**Mr. Antoine Dubé (Lévis, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, on October 11 I asked the Minister of Transport, considering the increase in the number of railway-related incidents and accidents in Canada, for a moratorium on the closure of one of the three track maintenance shops operated by CN in Charny, in my riding.

In his answer, the Minister of Transport said:

There are from time to time minor variations among all provinces but essentially when we look at accidents in the various categories in which they are analyzed, there has been a slight increase in some of the derailments but not at all untoward and certainly not out of the ordinary with respect to the normal variation statistics.

I hope this intervention produced some results, since last week I was told that CN had decided to extend the closure date. It will now be November 30 instead of October 30. I had hoped for a longer postponement, but still, a month is better than nothing.

I did not want to let that pass. One question during Oral Question Period is not much. I wanted to explain why, and I had read an article published in *Le Soleil* on August 15, which said: "A 50 per cent increase in derailments in Canada during the first seven months of 1996: from 97 in 1995, their number has now reached 146. For the month of July alone, they more than doubled, from 9 to 20".

I would like to give you some more statistics, since I have a few minutes left. For instance, the number of serious injuries as a result of accidents in 1995 was 40, but the annual average during the five previous years was 24. In 1995, the number of deaths caused by accidents was 87, while before it was 73. The total number of accidents for the last five years has gone up from 632 to 770.

I hardly need recall the figures given by *Le Soleil* on the number of accidents on the main lines, a main line that goes as far as the Maritimes, where accidents increased by more than 50 per cent.

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These figures were not produced by an outside office but by the railway safety service of the Department of Transport, which is the minister's responsibility.

This is not the first time I put this question to the minister. I had done so before, on June 12. And now, months later, after the summer recess, and despite the statistics and what we read in the newspapers, the minister answers: "These variations are not important". We are talking about 50 per cent, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Francis Gerard LeBlanc (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to respond on behalf of the Minister of Transport to what was said by the hon. member for Lévis.

The decision by CN to close the Joffre Shop, which is responsible for track maintenance equipment repair and overhaul is a business decision and is not related to safety. Transport Canada cannot examine every business decision made by a private company.

The relocation of the shop in Charny will have no impact on safety. The shop was responsible for the overhaul of track maintenance equipment. Equipment overhaul schedules have been modified to provide for more frequent light maintenance during operations instead of a complete overhaul. The location of the shop responsible for general overhaul has no impact on track maintenance itself. CN has announced that the shop will close on November 30, 1996.

For 1996, the cumulative statistics as of September 30, the most recent figures on main line accidents produced by the Transportation Safety Board of Canada, show a drop in the total number of accidents in Quebec and New Brunswick.

This fact is corroborated by the figures of Canadian National, according to which the Champlain district, which covers Quebec and the Maritimes, is the only district where the ratio of main line accidents has dropped between 1995 and 1996. Track maintenance, which is essential to safe operations, will continue with equipment that is always in good condition. Transport Canada works together with the railways in order to provide Canadians with the highest possible level of railway safety.

Transport Canada railway safety officers monitor railway and track maintenance operations, equipment and level crossings to guarantee the safety of our railways. The Railway Safety Act authorizes them to restrict railway operations if they discover unsafe conditions and to impose fines on companies in case of violations.

[English]

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Hopkins):** A motion to adjourn the House is 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 7.25 p.m.)



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