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Speaker: The Honourable Gilbert Parent

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Friday, January 28, 1994

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayers

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

SPEECH FROM THE THRONE

RESUMPTION OF DEBATE ON ADDRESS IN REPLY

The House resumed from January 27 consideration of the motion for an Address to His Excellency the Governor General in reply to his Speech at the opening of the session.

Hon. Diane Marleau (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to rise in this House as the representative of the people of Sudbury and also as Canada's Minister of Health to expand on a number of themes raised in the speech from the throne.

On October 25 Canadians from across this country sent a clear message to politicians that there are certain principles, policies and programs which must be maintained as part of our national heritage and our national fabric.

Fundamental among them is our national health system which for many Canadians represents the essence of our unique experience as a country.

Our health system remains the envy of people around the world. Many Canadians are watching with interest as our American neighbours wrestle with the many problems of upgrading their own health system. In a way the debate south of the border has served to heighten awareness in Canada of our own system, one that we may have come to take for granted.

[Translation]

I am fully aware of the financial pressures on our health care system. We, as Canadians, face a number of critical choices if we are to preserve and improve the health system which we all cherish.

(1005)

[English]

The challenges to our health system are daunting. We cannot isolate health issues from other public policy issues: economic, social, environmental and even political. As governments at all levels search for ways to ensure development and growth, I say look to the health system, look to the health of Canadians. A healthy Canada will be a wealthy Canada. The reverse is true as well, I might add.

[Translation]

Can a child who has not had a proper meal or proper rest absorb the mass of information required to prepare for the economy of the future? Can a worker who is dependent on alcohol or a prohibited substance produce at his or her full capacity? Can we deny Canadians access to the research and treatment breakthroughs in the health field which could improve their overall quality of life?

[English]

The health of Canadians is something that is precious to this country and so is the health system that has developed to support it. When we have something precious we must protect it. This government and this minister fully intend to protect the health system in Canada for all Canadians.

Our approach is straightforward. We intend to improve the current system, not by some radical shift in the fundamental principles, but by the development of creative solutions to the problems that have arisen as the system has grown and evolved. I call this approach creating value while maintaining values.

[Translation]

That means that we will stick to the five principles of the Canada Health Act which have served Canadians so well over the past quarter century.

Let me repeat what those five principles are since many members are new to this House and because the principles are so important to the debates which inevitably will ensue over the months ahead.

First, universality—Canada's health system must be for all Canadians.

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Second, portability—the benefits of our system must be available wherever in Canada our residents choose to live.

Third, comprehensiveness—it must include all medically necessary services.

Fourth, accessibility—no Canadian should be deprived access to the health system, and that means no user fees. This government cannot accept any measures which amount to a tax on sickness.

Fifth, public administration—the health of Canadians represents an important national asset and it must be administered overall on a non-profit basis by the public sector.

[*English*]

Even with these principles firmly entrenched there is still considerable opportunity to improve the overall health system. Since the health system is such an important national asset it is essential that we bring Canadians together to work co-operatively to renew and enhance it for the future.

There is considerable agreement that we need a more cost-effective and efficient health system and about what it should look like in the future. However there is little agreement about how we get there. These are not easy questions and they require a national dialogue to generate the necessary consensus to improve the health care system.

This is the thinking behind our announcement to create a national forum on health to be chaired by the Prime Minister of Canada.

(1010)

The Prime Minister's personal involvement signals just how important we consider this issue to be for our national well-being.

[*Translation*]

I know that some Canadians have grown tired of all the consultations, special task forces, and other mechanisms established by the previous government to examine issues ad nauseam. We know Canadians appreciate their health care system, we know they strongly oppose user fees, and we know they are looking to the federal government to continue to play a major role in the health system.

Let me assure you that this government is listening and acting upon these messages. We do not want to duplicate existing mechanisms for co-operation. Instead, we wish to create a focus for a national discussion on a health strategy for Canada which encompasses all the various viewpoints, including those of the ultimate users.

We understand that the federal government is not the only government responsible for the health of Canadians. We cannot and will not go it alone. That is why I will be discussing this

important initiative with my provincial colleagues when we meet in Ottawa on February 8 and 9.

I want to emphasize at this point that I am fully aware that health spending represents on average 30 per cent of provincial budgets and that provincial governments have made very significant efforts to come to grips with challenges in this area.

[*English*]

The national forum will provide an opportunity to highlight the issues and the difficult challenges all governments face. It will also help improve the climate for change.

However, governments at all levels cannot and should not bear the full responsibility for the health of Canadians. The medical profession, health care providers, the research community, the pharmaceutical and other health related industries, employers, employee organizations and consumers have important roles to play.

We hope that the national forum on health will raise the knowledge level of Canadians on a number of issues, many within their own control, and educate the general population on the possibilities as well as the challenges. Yes, individual Canadians also have a role to play. While health is a collective responsibility, it is also an individual responsibility.

We are each our own personal health managers. Many of our personal choices will determine the extent of our health and our quality of life. By bringing together all the participants from governments to individual users in this renewal exercise, I truly believe our health system can gain without pain.

[*Translation*]

One area where I believe that there is substantial potential for co-operation is in the field of health awareness. Right now, all levels of government are engaged in awareness programs on such issues as substance abuse and AIDS. Improved co-ordination among federal, provincial and territorial program areas would certainly lead to more efficient messaging and give all Canadians greater return on their health investment.

[*English*]

Where I live in Sudbury, northern Ontario, the health needs and the available services vary from those in downtown Toronto, Montreal or Vancouver. But a good idea developed in Sudbury or for that matter in Moncton or Red Deer can be of value to all Canadians wherever they live. There are plenty of good ideas out there in Sudbury and in every region of Canada. Let me give hon. members a few examples.

For nearly 20 years there has been a federal-provincial territorial committee on group purchasing of drugs and vaccines whose efforts have resulted in real savings to our health care system. When one member changed the method of supply for measles, mumps and rubella vaccine from dealing directly with

The Address

the supplier to bulk purchasing through this group, they realized a 68 per cent saving.

(1015)

Three Ontario schools, including Laurentian University in Sudbury, are establishing undergraduate programs in midwifery which are expected to save money by reducing the number of prenatal doctor visits while providing pregnant women with quality care in the community.

[*Translation*]

Unique to Quebec are the local community service centres which provide locally-based health care in an effective and client-friendly manner. All of these programs are good examples of what I call spending smarter.

By placing existing innovative programs within a more coherent framework and by bringing together creative people with those who must administer and those who must use the system, I believe we can generate even more ideas which can add value to the overall health framework in Canada.

International comparisons show us that we do not have to spend more to produce a better overall health system for Canadians. For example, thousands of Canadians are sent every day for medical treatments of various kinds. But how many of those treatments are really evaluated to see if there are effective and better alternatives? I believe that there is tremendous potential for savings in our health system by doing a proper evaluation of what currently exists.

[*English*]

I believe that women's health requires special attention. One of our specific initiatives, as outlined in the red book and the speech from the throne, will be the creation of a centre of excellence for women's health.

Traditionally the health system has been regarded as gender neutral, but most adult women and adolescent girls can give vivid examples of how the system has a strong male bias. The women's health issue is an area which I believe urgently needs more research as the recent forum on breast cancer so dramatically highlighted. I must add that this is a personal priority of mine.

Let us face it, there are basic biological differences between women and men. Gender does have an impact on the distribution of many diseases across the population. Yet many clinical trials of drugs and other treatments under-represent women in their samples or exclude women completely. Not only is it bad policy, it is bad medicine.

Women do have special conditions, from osteoporosis to menopause, and they merit equal attention from research to treatment, to care and prevention. We have to move the health

system forward in this regard, not to the detriment of anyone's health but to the benefit of everyone's health.

Again, we have many ideas in this area from the establishment of specific research goals to the development of programs for groups such as immigrant women and aboriginal women whose particular needs have not always been adequately served by the health system.

[*Translation*]

Any discussion of women's health must establish the connection between violence in the family and the overall health of the woman, her children, and others living in the household. My colleague, the Minister of Justice, has overall responsibility for this critical area, but my department continues to play an important role with respect to family violence prevention through building partnerships with non-governmental organizations and the provincial and territorial governments. We will develop a national strategy to address the various aspects of women's health, and my department will work diligently, again in close co-operation with our partners, to pull together all the pieces of this gender puzzle.

The establishment of centres of excellence for women's health is only the first step in a solution. What we really need is the basic research and raw data on which to base our future programs and policies.

[*English*]

Preventing illness is just as much a health care responsibility as curing it. One of the unique biological functions of women is childbirth. Our government is committed to enhancing the support system for this important period of a woman's life by creating a pre-natal nutrition program for women at risk. In Canada there are between 350,000 and 400,000 pregnancies a year. Of these, 10 per cent of pregnant women are at risk because of poor health and malnutrition. Poor nutrition is a risk factor for low birth weight in newborn babies. In turn, low birth weight is the determining factor in about two-thirds of all deaths among newborns. Those who survive are at greater risk of developing serious and chronic disabilities.

(1020)

The costs of this can be startling. For the 21,000 babies who have an unsatisfactory birth weight, the immediate costs of medical care can be as high as \$60,000 per infant. As their lives progress they face higher risks of poor health and developmental difficulties which could sentence them to a life of poverty.

What is the cost of preventing such a fate? We believe that it runs in the range of \$300 to \$400 a pregnancy, depending on individual circumstances. Again, good health policy is sound economic policy.

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Healthy children are also very much at the heart of a program we proposed for aboriginal families living off reserve in urban centres and in large northern communities. The aboriginal head start program would provide enriched programs for young children and include such important elements as nutritional counselling, physical activity and child care.

However, it also involves parents as both leaders and learners. The program would be designed and managed by aboriginal people at the community level and would be sensitive to both cultural and linguistic realities. We anticipate committing \$10 million to this program in its first year, to be expanded to a total of \$40 million in its fourth year of operation.

Successful head start programs can help reduce some of the effects of poverty by stimulating a desire for learning, by entrenching a positive self image and by providing for social, emotional and physical needs of these at risk children.

If successful—and I am very positive it will be—this program could be extended to other Canadian children in need.

Children are the future of our country and their well-being is everyone's responsibility. Healthy, confident children can develop and grow to their potential and all of us benefit.

In the early sixties, when I was a secretary in a doctor's office, I had to collect the outstanding accounts. I know first-hand how medical bills can paralyse a family. It has as much devastation as any debilitating illness. It is the reason why I am so set against user fees. In my mind, compassion must always come first. Without it we are simply turning health into another commodity to be traded and bargained for. That is not my way. In my world people, from newborns to seniors, come first. I pledge to this House that the people aspect of health will remain the driving force behind all of our thinking.

In the months ahead it is our intention to work with all Canadians to make an excellent health care system even better. Canadians should expect no less and this government will make it happen.

Mr. Myron Thompson (Wild Rose): Madam Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate you on your appointment and wish you the very best. I also want to congratulate the hon. minister on a very fine and well-delivered speech. I have only had the opportunity to meet this minister on a short term.

(1025)

Having been a high school principal for many years I have a tendency to take a first impression of people. I would like the members of this House to know that I indeed was impressed with the minister. I know she is going to be a fine lady to do this job and can count on a lot of support. I do not envy her. It is an horrendous task.

However, I have one thing I would like to bring up concerning user fees. This Chamber is transferring the responsibility of delivering medical services to the provinces. The province of Alberta is struggling desperately to save its health care programs. Under the leadership of Ralph Klein, the Government of Alberta and the people of Alberta have jointly agreed to institute some form of user fee that would not affect those who are most in need.

Does the hon. minister not feel that if we are putting that kind of responsibility on that province that we should not interfere with the deliverance of that medical process?

Ms. Marleau: Madam Speaker, I thank the hon. member for Wild Rose for his kind words. It is indeed a new Parliament and a new atmosphere here. I do not recall ever having heard these kind words in the last Parliament.

I would like to remind the hon. member for Wild Rose that the actual management of the health care system is within the jurisdiction of provincial governments but the federal government does set the parameters. The Canada Health Act specifies medically necessary services.

I hold very dearly to the concept that user fees are detrimental to what happens to Canadians. I am going to tell you why. In many instances when a user fee is charged it becomes a short-term way of collecting more money but it does not change the functioning of the health care system. What ends up happening is that the same people who perhaps have been abusing the system or not using it properly then feel that they can continue to misuse or not use appropriately the actual medical system in place.

Very often those people who needed to access that service could not because they did not have the amount of money available to pay up front. It perhaps was a very small fee but for some people it is a big fee. They do not visit the doctor in the early stages of a disease and in the end the disease progresses. They become much sicker and have to enter the hospital. The whole thing has now cost the government far more because not only does it have to pay the medical costs, it then has to pick up all of the other social costs associated with, let us say, a single parent being admitted to a hospital. It also has to bear the brunt of the hospital costs which are far higher than the initial doctor's visit might have been.

From my personal experience, I know that a user fee is the wrong way to go. It is not the way to ensure that our system changes to meet the needs of those who really need it.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Maurice Bernier (Mégantic—Compton—Stanstead): Madam Speaker, I want to start by congratulating the Minister of Health on her election of course, but also on her appointment to this portfolio which is extremely important to all Quebecers and Canadians.

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I listened with a great deal of interest to her speech and, as the hon. member before me said, I really get the feeling that the minister is concerned about preserving an efficient health care system while acknowledging at the same time the financial problems that the government is currently facing. This is to her credit.

(1030)

I would, however, like to draw her attention to the work being done in the community. She referred to initiatives aimed at lowering the cost of providing services. It is a well-known fact that community organizations are doing some amazing work in this area.

I represent the constituency of Mégantic—Compton—Stansstead and in the Eastern Townships where I live, there is an agency called IRIS that provides counselling and home care services to persons with AIDS. This organization's incredible work is praised by all those working in the community sector and, of course, by people with AIDS. IRIS, like most other organizations of this nature, depends on grants to stay in business. The cost of the services it provides cannot be compared to the cost of caring for people in an institutional setting. The salaries paid to workers in the community-based sector are, more often than not, well below the poverty level and volunteers are crucial to the operation of these agencies.

I would like the minister to tell us what importance she attaches to the community-based sector and what her government intends to do, not only to maintain but to increase the level of assistance to community agencies right across Canada, and to those in my region and my riding in particular.

Mrs. Marleau: Madam Speaker, as you know we are deeply concerned about funding issues. The National Forum on Health which will be held shortly will examine many of these questions. It is absolutely essential that we look at ways of treating people while using the dollars we have more effectively.

The local community service centres, or CLSCs, in Quebec have a remarkable history. They do extraordinary work and they are certainly an example to many others in our country. Therefore, I hope that we will be able to compare notes and exchange ideas because I am convinced that they will provide us with an answer to the financial pressures we are now facing.

[English]

Mr. John Solomon (Regina—Lumsden): Madam Speaker, my congratulations to the minister of health on her appointment to cabinet.

The minister may recall that Bill C-91 was passed in the last Parliament. It was a bill ensuring that drug manufacturers have patent protection for certain drugs. The minister may also know

that since that bill has been passed the cost of prescription drugs to Canadians has skyrocketed.

Given the fact that this bill has provided monopolistic protection for drug manufacturers to charge whatever prices they see fit to people who really require prescription drugs for the sake of their health and in many cases are in life giving situations, is the minister now contemplating a repealing of Bill C-91?

Ms. Marleau: Madam Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his question, but let me remind him that the particular bill on patent legislation is the responsibility of the minister of industry, science and technology.

What concerns me, though, is the cost of prescription drugs because it puts an awful burden on our health care system. The patented prices review board which reviews the prices of patented drugs has reported that in the first six months of 1993 the prices of patented medicines have decreased somewhat.

This being said, I am still very much concerned with the prices of non-patented drugs which take up a very large number of dollars. I am also very much concerned with a statistic released recently that indicated our usage of prescription drugs had increased by over 8 per cent.

(1035)

There are very serious problems that we have to address and I am working with my provincial counterparts to find a solution to them.

[Translation]

Mrs. Monique Guay (Laurentides): Madam Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise today in this House. I first want to express my sincere thanks to the people of my constituency of Laurentides for their support and for the confidence they placed in me last October 25. The people of Laurentides, surely the most beautiful riding in Canada, can count on me to represent them well in this House. I will do my job in a vigorous and dynamic manner. My actions and decisions will always be based on the principles of respect, equity and dignity.

Last October 25 the population made a choice reflecting its profound dissatisfaction with the existing political and administrative system. The people clearly showed us that they were fed up with an unproductive system that is too costly and too complex and that does not meet the needs of a population looking for major changes. They also demand more power through their members of Parliament to influence and guide their government.

Let us never forget that we are the people's representatives. We must always act as their spokespersons and look after their welfare. If we want to regain their trust, I honestly think that we should adhere to that philosophy.

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We, as members of the Bloc Québécois, intend to address the problems clearly identified during the last election campaign. Our efforts will focus on creating long-term jobs, reducing the debt, putting government finances on a healthier footing, maintaining social benefits and, of course, promoting Quebec sovereignty. Despite what some members of this House are saying, the people in my riding knowingly elected me as a sovereigntist member of Parliament. We did not wait till the morning of October 26 to tell Quebecers: "Okay, from now on we want a sovereign Quebec". That was our message throughout the election campaign and the people still elected us.

Our mandate is clear. Even if the Prime Minister claims that he does not want anything to do with the constitutional debate, we will always remind him that our basic mandate is to help Quebec achieve sovereignty. We were elected on a sovereignty platform, without making election promises, without a Prime Minister's office to table projects.

If the government intends, as it says in the throne speech, to work vigorously to make federalism meet the needs of Canadians, we on this side will do the same to promote our political option that will also certainly meet the needs of Quebecers.

These needs are numerous and vary for each individual. However, what people need can generally be summed up as decent living conditions. The government must do its utmost to meet these basic individual needs.

Regarding employment, we all know that the government has just launched its famous infrastructure program. This program that the Liberals see as the saviour of our economy is clearly insufficient. It does not bring about any of the major changes needed by our flagging economy. The government is creating short-term jobs.

The worker who paves a road or paints a building will find himself without a job again after his contract is completed. The government will never manage to create long-term jobs in this manner. The infrastructure program is only a band-aid solution. We put ointment on the cut without worrying about the scar. The program will create 65,000 temporary jobs, while over 1.5 million Canadians are unemployed.

(1040)

The government must strive to find and create sound, original programs to more effectively fight the chronic unemployment that has plagued us far too long already. We must act now. In my riding, which is part of the Laurentides administrative region, the unemployment rate was 15.1 per cent in December 1993. Add to that 28,000 income support recipients and this brings the total of unemployed people to 60,000, out of a workforce of 213,000. This means that 28 per cent of our people are out of work. That is an alarming figure and a great concern to me. We

cannot hope to make our society a better place to live in when so many people are unproductive.

Work is an important value and is essential to the good health of people and societies. It is imperative the government address this priority. We on this side are prepared to support any sensible action that would hold the promise of lasting employment.

The road to employment must include manpower training, an area that currently reflects how poorly the federal system is working. The workers also need to be able to respond quickly to market requirements. I would be remiss not to mention the youth employment issue that we have to examine thoroughly. Drop-outs and street children are a growing social phenomenon that demand serious attention. We must lead, guide, motivate our young people to plan a career that will be rewarding to them. It is not with the Youth Service Corps, which revives so to speak the former Katimavik program, that we are going to boost youth employment while young Canadians are so hard hit by the present economic situation.

Supporting the efforts of businesses to gain access to new markets is another good way to increase employment levels. The government must play a major role at the international level by developing with the stakeholders ways to spot market opportunities that can be seized to create longer-term employment.

Another interesting alternative is work restructuring. If our economy is sluggish, managing work differently could make up for it.

The throne speech suggested very few new approaches in that area. It is marked by a glaring lack of vision and innovative ideas. Yet, this is an all new government.

As opposition critic for public works and government services, I have given some thought to the complexity of the system and how the country should be run.

At first glance, it is obvious that the system is getting out of control and does not promote effectiveness, as the Auditor General's reports keep reminding us year after year.

My remarks will of course tie in with my party's priorities in terms of fiscal consolidation. Our position is clear. We want a House committee to be set up to review budget expenditures, item by item, and cut unnecessary expenditures, including some defence expenditures.

The purpose of the review will be to maximise the return on investment of every dollar taken out of the pockets of Canadian taxpayers. We must put an end to squandering, trim the fat, reduce the number of departments and streamline their operation.

The message we received last October 25 was unequivocal: the taxpayers have had it with paying all the time but not getting their money's worth. As our leader said in his reply, the people of Quebec are certainly not reaping the so-called federal manna.

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(1045)

The big Canadian bureaucracy, an insatiable tax collector, is unable to control its costs, to eliminate needless spending, to cut fat. The ship is huge and it is sinking faster every day. The crew cannot plug the thousands of holes which are dragging them down. For now, Quebecers are on the ship but they have asked us to start inflating a lifeboat so they can return to dry land. That is a very realistic request.

Right here in this House, we are able to note wasteful spending, superfluity and a certain indifference to all that. Imagine a similar situation in all departments and crown corporations. Monstrous is the word that comes to my mind.

Just in front of the Centre Block of Parliament, Public Works and Government Services is now doing masonry work in mid-winter. A well-built shelter is being heated and masonry work is going on. Is that logical and sensible? Would it not cost less to do that work in summer? Who decides? Every day, we see workers on the roof of the Supreme Court. I know that this work is done by the private sector, but is it logical and does it make budgetary sense to plan roofing work for mid-winter? Who makes those decisions?

We in the Bloc Québécois all advocate a clean-up of the federal government. However, these cutbacks must not be made on the backs of the poorest people in our society, the Quebecers and Canadians who have been left behind and in these last few years have had to cut not luxuries but necessities. This is particularly true for co-operative and social housing programs.

In this International Year of the Family, how can we accept that some families do not live in clean, well-heated, well-lit homes? How can we ignore this deplorable situation? How can the speech from the throne be silent on this question? Of course, we are promised a residential renovation program. But how will we renovate homes for the poorest people who are homeless?

The present government seems inclined to follow in the footsteps of its predecessors under whom, from 1984 to 1994, the number of social housing units built in Canada dropped from 25,000 a year to zero: what a Tory massacre.

Today, across Canada, some 1.2 million households urgently need housing. In Quebec, the figures show an intolerable level of poverty. One household in three, or 404,000 tenant households, pay more than 30 per cent of their income for housing. Even worse, one household in six, or 194,000 households, pay more than 50 per cent of their income for housing.

In New Brunswick, according to the *Telegraph Journal* for October 1993, 28,000 people needed adequate housing. However, the government remains silent on this subject. Every month, hundreds of thousands of households ask the same question: How to pay the rent? How do you pay the rent when all your income is from welfare, unemployment insurance, an old-age pension or from insecure, underpaid or part-time employment?

Households cut in other areas, on food, clothing, transportation and the few recreational activities that are still affordable. Single people and the ever-growing number of one-parent families in our society are the most affected by this deplorable situation. I add to this list the homeless, the young people who are out on the street and the native people living in cities.

Do we pay the rent or eat? Does anyone in this House have to ask himself or herself that question at the beginning of each month? So why do fellow citizens have to ask themselves that question? Must we conclude that the Liberals do not care, since the throne speech is silent on this issue? Will the Liberals reinstate federal assistance to social housing or not? This situation is a real shame. The government should be quick to act and invest in a global social housing program in order to meet the urgent needs of the poor. In Great Britain and in the Netherlands social housing units represent 70 per cent of all rented dwellings. In Sweden, it is 55 per cent.

(1050)

In 1991, only 10 per cent of dwellings were social housing units. The right to a dwelling is a basic one for everyone, regardless of their income, their sex, their race, and their physical or mental health.

The private sector, which is strictly motivated by profits, is unable to fully respect this right and to allow everybody to have access to dwellings. The state must play a major role in the housing sector.

Over the last few years, we have repeatedly seen members of Parliament cut ribbons to mark the opening of social, low-income, co-op or other social housing units. These members had a big smile on their face; however, they refrained from telling the public that their scissors were also cutting housing programs for the poor. Indeed, as of January 1994 these programs are a thing of the past.

I ask the members opposite to go to their ridings to see what is going on and to realize that some people are living in very inadequate dwellings. I also ask them to talk to the Minister of Finance to tell him to restore and improve the social housing programs which were abruptly ended by the Conservatives.

To get an idea of the urgency of this issue, tonight go to bed without eating and turn off the heating. You will put yourself in the situation experienced by thousands of households at the end of each month. If it is very cold, your skin will gradually turn

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from red to blue, colours we are very familiar with in this House. At that point, get up and turn the heating back on, otherwise the cold will get to you and you could face amputation, with only two members in your house. Now, this is something we have seen before.

You will then understand your mistake; you will realize that your coolness toward the poor has left you totally incapable of doing anything except implore. Honourable members opposite, I realize that the red book has become your bible, but other books exist. For your information, I can tell you that the Messiah is no longer with us and, in any case, was not from the riding of Saint-Maurice.

Let me tell you that we Bloc Quebecois members are going to keep a close eye on you; we are constantly going to pester you regarding social housing and other social programs. We are here not only to promote Quebec's sovereignty, but also to protect the interests of the poor.

The disengagement of the federal government is an inhuman act. The government uses the public debt to justify unjustifiable cuts. It keeps telling us, like the Prime Minister did, that we have to live within our means. There is not enough money. Yet, the government grants numerous tax exemptions which cost billions of dollars every year and which profit the rich. Canadians obviously want changes in this area. We mentioned it clearly before October 25 and people supported our message on tax reform.

In the long run, additional funding for social housing will translate into very significant savings in sectors such as health and social services and will have a major impact on the economy, for example as regards job creation.

I am disappointed by the throne speech as regards social housing and in fact many other issues. We were hoping for new initiatives from the new Liberal team which was announced during the election campaign. Unfortunately, originality, creativity and new ideas do not seem to come easy to that new team. Quite the contrary. Its program is flat and bland. We are part of the federal system. Quebecers will soon decide about their future. In the meantime, we are here to promote sovereignty and to protect the interests of Quebecers and those of the poor within our community.

(1055)

I do hope that each hon. member in this House will have a thought for the poor in his or her riding and in our society.

Hon. Fernand Robichaud (Secretary of State (Parliamentary Affairs)): Madam Speaker, I want to congratulate the hon. member for Laurentides for her speech and I can assure her that the members on this side of the House will certainly have special thoughts for the underprivileged and the people who need housing.

The hon. member wants to protect the rights of Quebecers and of all Canadians. She also said in her speech that the Canadian ship is, in fact, sinking. She mentioned a lifeboat they were trying to inflate. I find it a bit hard to understand how the members opposite can claim to act in the interests of all Canadians when they use their separatist argumentation like a torpedo to try to sink the Canadian ship. Does the hon. member not know that her speech is not helping and is not in the best interests of Canadians?

Mr. Duhamel: He is right, you know.

Mrs. Guay: Madam Speaker, when we say we want to work in the best interests of the underprivileged in Canada, we mean it. I maintain that the Canadian ship is sinking and I think the government managed to do it without our help.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

Mrs. Guay: We are now trying to save the underprivileged and Quebec.

[English]

Mr. Bill Gilmour (Comox—Alberni): Madam Speaker, may I take this opportunity to congratulate you, the government and all other members of the House on their recent successful elections. I would also thank the residents of Comox—Alberni for allowing me the honour of representing them in the House.

Comox—Alberni is a large resource based riding on central Vancouver Island. The key natural resources are forestry and fishing. In addition there are several retirement communities located on the east coast of the island, as well as the Canadian forces base located at Comox.

I thank my family, my wife Karen and my son Cameron, for without their help I would not be here today.

(1100)

I would like to address some concerns shared by many Canadians about anticipated actions of the government regarding natural resources, in particular issues concerning forestry and the environment.

Forest products are not only British Columbia's main export but Canada's as well. Forestry is Canada's number one industry as many members here today will be able to attest in their own ridings.

For example, in British Columbia the forest sector provided 270,000 jobs, paid \$2.4 billion in taxes, and exported \$11 billion worth of products in 1992. However the forest sector is facing losses both in jobs and in profits and will continue to do so until a balance is struck between forest conservation and forest development.

The Speaker: It being eleven o'clock a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 30(5) the House will now proceed to statements by members, pursuant to Standing Order 31.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[English]

ALZHEIMER AWARENESS MONTH

Ms. Hedy Fry (Vancouver Centre): Mr. Speaker, January is Alzheimer Awareness Month in Canada. All across the country organizations involved with Alzheimer's disease will undertake activities to raise awareness of this terrible illness. There is no known cause or cure for Alzheimer's disease. It not only affects the people who have it but it also affects the lives of their families and friends.

Caring for someone with Alzheimer's at home is challenging and burdensome. Alzheimer Awareness Month is a time to demonstrate support for Canadians with Alzheimer's and their families. It is also a time to acknowledge the many informal caregivers who are doing such a tremendous job throughout the country.

I urge all Canadians to support efforts to increase public awareness of Alzheimer's disease and to research to find a cure.

* * *

[Translation]

TRAGEDY IN LES BOULES

Mr. René Canuel (Matapédia—Matane): Mr. Speaker, the small village of Les Boules in my constituency was hit by a terrible tragedy last Tuesday, when five members of one family died in the fire that destroyed their home. Mr. Michel St-Pierre and his four daughters, Julie, Claudia, Jessie and Émilie, aged 15 months to 11 years, all died in the blaze. Only the mother, Martine, miraculously got away. Mr. St-Pierre was well known in the area for his involvement in municipal politics and his performance in various sports. The couple also did volunteer work to help the destitute in the area.

I want to express my deepest sympathy to the friends and family of Mr. St-Pierre as well as to his fellow citizens. This loss will deeply affect this small community.

[English]

The Speaker: Order. I know hon. members want to present their statements, but before I give the floor to the hon. member for Prince George—Peace River may I suggest that when they practise their statements they are about 50 seconds, and things would probably flow more smoothly in the House.

* * *

DECORUM

Mr. Jay Hill (Prince George—Peace River): Mr. Speaker, I rise today on a matter of importance to all members of the House

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of Commons, one which I believe is of concern to many Canadians. I am speaking of decorum, or rather the lack of it, in the Chamber.

I applaud my colleagues in the Reform Party, the members of the Bloc Québécois, as well as the new Liberal and independent MPs, for the restraint they have shown and for the example they are attempting to set for our more experienced colleagues.

Considering the lack of respect demonstrated by some hon. members, is it any wonder that Canadians take comedians seriously but think politicians are a joke?

If we are ever to change the attitude of Canadians toward parliamentarians our greatest opportunity is now. I implore you, Mr. Speaker, as well as members of the media and the constituents we represent, to assist us rookie MPs in our efforts to restore dignity to the House.

* * *

(1105)

MULTICULTURALISM

Mr. Rey D. Pagtakhan (Winnipeg North): Mr. Speaker, I would like to refute statements made by members of the Official Opposition who charge that so-called ethnic ghettos are the inevitable byproduct of Canada's multiculturalism policy.

In fact my constituents and I in Winnipeg North view the tremendous ethnic diversity of our neighbourhoods as one of their most endearing and exciting qualities.

The variety of cultures that come together on our streets and in our schools and offices enhance the character and quality of life for all residents.

The suggestion that the varied ethnic makeup of an area necessarily leads to any form of ghettoization is patently false.

The multiculturalism policy is there to help primarily non-English, non-French and non-aboriginal Canadians on an individual and community basis to play an important role in the development and cohesion of Canadian society.

Overall the policy is about the equal participation of all citizens irrespective of cultural backgrounds and thereby counteracting isolation and fostering national unity.

* * *

POVERTY

Mr. Ronald J. Duhamel (St. Boniface): Mr. Speaker, the city of Winnipeg has the highest percentage of low income households in western Canada. Twelve thousand households use food banks every month, almost three times as many as in 1990.

Unfortunately there has been a collective growth in the number of people using food banks across the country.

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[*Translation*]

More than 60 per cent of single-parent families live below the poverty line. We know full well that children who live in such miserable conditions are unable to realize their full potential in school and are more likely to contract infectious diseases.

[*English*]

While the two-pronged approach to job creation offered by the government's platform as well as other specific programs is not a panacea, it will address this lamentable situation and boost the standard of living of thousands of Canadians currently living below the poverty line.

Only through the creation of jobs will the quality of life improve for these unfortunate Canadians.

* * *

MULTICULTURALISM

Mr. Gurbax Malhi (Bramalea—Gore—Malton): Mr. Speaker, the comments made yesterday in the House that suggested multiculturalism creates ghettos are wrong.

Some members seem to believe new Canadians will flock together in abject poverty if multiculturalism is allowed to continue. This is absurd. To its credit, the Government of Canada wants new Canadians to retain their culture and heritage.

The melting pot philosophy of the United States, which seems to be what some members want here, is not the answer. Are there no ghettos in the United States?

As we head into the 21st century this is not the time for xenophobia. The world is getting smaller and Canadians are demonstrating how we can all live together without losing our identity.

* * *

[*Translation*]

EMPLOYMENT

Mr. Gaston Péloquin (Brome—Missisquoi): Mr. Speaker, the speech from the throne tells us that job creation is the government's top priority. Yet, just before Christmas, the Distribution and Transportation Directorate of the House of Commons dismissed 10 messengers.

What surprises me is that when the Conservative government tried to dismiss these same messengers in August 1993, several members of the present government protested vehemently. Even the hon. member for Hamilton East, now Deputy Prime Minister, said at that time, and I quote:

[*English*]

“For many this is the only family income. The result will be hardship and misery for the employees, their spouses and children”.

[*Translation*]

Even the hon. member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell said in a radio interview that it was shameful to offer 20 hours of work a week to these heads of families with two or three children. He thought it was just like sending them straight to the welfare office.

They were promised full-time jobs some time in the future, but for now, all they have are temporary jobs.

* * *

[*English*]

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Mr. Jack Frazer (Saanich—Gulf Islands): Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak on unfairness in the unemployment insurance system.

Some members of the Canadian forces, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and public service are paying premiums for unemployment insurance they will never be allowed to collect.

When they reach a certain stage in their careers these people, should they retire or be released, have qualified for and will receive a pension sufficient to make them ineligible to receive unemployment insurance. Yet at present they are still required to pay the premiums. Since they can no longer collect unemployment insurance they should no longer have to pay UI premiums.

(1110)

I submit the regulations should be changed so that when the pension entitlements of individuals equal or exceed the unemployment insurance they would receive, they stop paying UI premiums. To do otherwise amounts to extra and unfair taxation.

* * *

VOLUNTEER SERVICES

Mr. Francis G. LeBlanc (Cape Breton Highlands—Canso): Mr. Speaker, the Strait Area Mutual Aid Association is a group of 25 volunteer rescue units in eastern Nova Scotia that responds to emergencies such as fires, accidents and search and rescues, all free of charge to governments or citizens. These volunteer services are absolutely vital to safety in rural communities, but they are being gouged by the outrageous radio licence fees they must pay to the federal government.

The previous Conservative government raised the association's fee from a flat rate of \$260 per year to an irrational calculation totalling over \$8,000. This increase ignores the economic value of volunteer services to the federal government and it threatens the very future of these services in rural Canada.

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I call upon the new industry minister to correct this situation. Volunteer rescue units simply cannot afford these high fees, and eastern Nova Scotia simply cannot afford to lose their services.

* * *

PORT PERRY

Mr. Alex Shepherd (Durham): Mr. Speaker, I would like to speak very briefly about one of the towns in my riding. It is known as Port Perry and it is my home town. This is a beautiful place on the shores of Lake Scugog, ideal for recreation, fishing, tourism and other sports.

Recently one of our high school students who travelled out west for a vacation and to explore Canada, Elaine Lally, was involved in a very serious car accident and continued hospitalization was required.

I note our whole community will be out tonight in force to show our support and make financial contribution to the family. I believe it is important to realize that in these difficult economic times, with so much unemployment and other hardships in our midst, our communities can rally in support worthwhile causes and not lose insight into the important aspects of life which I believe unite all Canadians.

* * *

NATIONAL FORUM ON HEALTH

Mr. Peter Adams (Peterborough): Mr. Speaker, I was pleased this morning to hear the minister of health talk about the national forum on health which will be chaired by the Prime Minister.

I hope the forum will address the shortage of physicians in rural areas and the movement of physicians trained in Canada to the United States. Villages like Keene and Lakefield in the township of Otonabee in Peterborough riding are already suffering serious shortages of physicians.

As costs are cut there is a tendency to centralize services. To obtain dialysis, for example, people have to travel great distances in great discomfort.

I hope the national forum will bear in mind that a highly centralized health system that appears cheaper at first sight will in the end cost more.

* * *

[Translation]

SOREL-TRACY AREA

Mr. Louis Plamondon (Richelieu): Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to invite all Quebecers and Canadians to the opening of the one-kilometre long skating rink set up by the Association des chasseurs et pêcheurs de Sainte-Anne-de-Sorel in the magnificent scenery of the Sorel islands.

Visitors will also get the chance to participate in the Carnaval de l'acier, one of the 10 most popular winter events in Quebec, which will be held from February 5 to 14. This year, the city of Tracy will be especially honoured on its 40th anniversary. Ten artists will create a gigantic snow sculpture representing the history and cultural heritage of this community.

Welcome to all in this beautiful setting of Sorel-Tracy which is equally charming during the winter and in the summertime.

* * *

[English]

ARCTIC WINTER GAMES

Mr. David Chatters (Athabasca): Mr. Speaker, I take this opportunity to inform all Canadians about an event that is taking place in my riding of Athabasca.

The Arctic Winter Games will take place in the community of Slave Lake, Alberta, from March 6 to March 12, 1994. These international games are open to athletes north of the 55th parallel. They will provide an opportunity for athletes from small, remote communities to take part in international competition. Many of these athletes will go on to much higher levels of competition.

The games will be opened March 6 by Governor General Ramon Hnatyshyn and will welcome teams from the Northwest Territories, Yukon, Alaska, northern Alberta, Greenland and Russia, involving 1,465 athletes, coaches and cultural participants.

(1115)

The \$3.1 million cost of the games will be funded half by the federal, provincial and municipal governments and half by a very successful local volunteer fund raising effort.

Please join with me in wishing the town of Slave Lake and all the athletes great success.

* * *

BURLINGTON WINTER CARNIVAL

Ms. Paddy Torsney (Burlington): Mr. Speaker, while many of us are familiar with Ottawa's Winterlude, I would like to inform the House that in my riding of Burlington we celebrate winter with a big splash as well.

Burlington's family winter carnival extends over three weekends and began January 23 with an eight-kilometre Robbie Burns Day race. Organized by volunteers, local businesses and organizations, the event attracts people from all over the region.

Sponsors include the *Burlington Spectator*, St. John Ambulance, the Halton Regional Police Force, Ford Motor Company, and Energy 108.

Oral Questions

I invite all members to join with us in events such as the annual women's snowball–basketball tournament and the annual high school hockey tournament and enjoy winter.

* * *

THE BUDGET

Mr. Len Taylor (The Battlefords—Meadow Lake): Mr. Speaker, at the pre–budget consultations hosted by the Minister of Finance the government has listened to Canadians saying that job creation must be the nation's first priority.

When I listen to these people, just as when I listen to people at the skating rinks, coffee shops and street corners in my constituency, I also hear a message that says the people of Canada want job and income security, as well as competence and fairness in the way government collects and spends taxpayers' money. The bottom line is that Canadians want to see results that will restore their confidence in their own as well as Canada's future.

There are many ideas on the table and the finance minister has a difficult task ahead of him. The advice he is getting from ordinary Canadians is: concentrate on creating jobs, provide greater economic security and put more fairness into our tax system. He will be doing the right thing and it will benefit of all Canadians.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[*Translation*]

NATIONAL DEFENCE

Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval): Mr. Speaker, last night we heard after secret negotiations obviously behind closed doors, that apparently there had been no incident at Kanesatake.

Could the Minister of National Defence tell me why he kept this meeting between the military authorities and the Mohawks secret up to the very last minute, after we had been asking the minister questions all week about this matter and we only got answers that did not make sense?

Hon. David Michael Collenette (Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs): Mr. Speaker, yesterday there was a meeting between the officials of the Canadian forces and Chief Peltier of Kanesatake, a normal meeting for information purposes. There is no secret and there is no crisis.

As I explained earlier in the House, the natives believe that reserves are sovereign, which is certainly not the position of the

Canadian government. The armed forces have the right to travel anywhere in Canada.

What the natives want, especially in Kanesatake, is to be advised when there is a plane or helicopter in the area. Permission is not an issue, because it is the position of the Canadian government that although it is our duty to let people know, we do not need permission.

Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval): Mr. Speaker, I am glad to see the minister is now prepared to answer our questions, which will make things easier all around.

Just to make sure the minister does not change his story again, could he confirm there was no trace of bullets of any kind on any of the aircraft, that there was no shooting and that, except for the army's meeting with the Mohawks, there was no investigation and there will be no investigation?

[*English*]

Hon. David Michael Collenette (Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs): Mr. Speaker, the chief has stated publicly that the matter is closed. I stated that yesterday. There is no damage to the helicopter or to the planes.

I would like to repeat the position of the Government of Canada in English. The natives believe that their reserves are sovereign. I realize, and the hon. member opposite knows that, the word sovereign is being kicked around on a day–to–day basis in Quebec. Frankly we do not like the way it is being kicked around. We do not like the way the natives are being dragged into the sovereignty debate.

(1120)

We believe that the matter is closed. This was obviously something of great concern to the natives when the helicopter landed, and that there are great sensitivities.

The chief has said that even though they believe their land is sovereign, a position we do not accept, he does not expect the Canadian forces to ask permission to have any of its planes or personnel deployed in the area but simply to have notice as we would do for any local authority whether in the hon. member's riding or the city of Vanier down the street.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval): Mr. Speaker, since the territory of Kanesatake and all territories inhabited by the Mohawks in Quebec have the same status as other territories, could the minister tell us whether, as he probably would do anywhere else, he is willing to simply give us some information about the transmitter, the signal that touched off these events? Would the minister care to shed some light on the subject?

*Oral Questions**[English]*

Hon. David Michael Collenette (Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I have answered this question before in the House. The chief is satisfied.

There was a signal. We had a Hercules aircraft in the area. It radioed back to Trenton where it was known we had a search and rescue helicopter at Dorval. It was dispatched immediately to the area because of the electronic signal on DND frequency.

A search was made of the area. In the meantime the Hercules had to circle around the area which gave the natives cause for concern. Obviously it could not land but it had to help the helicopter pinpoint from where the electronic signal was coming.

The helicopter landed. The crew made a search and just before they were finished and had come to the conclusion there was no downed plane and there did not seem to be an emergency—they did not exactly know where the signal was coming from but if they had stayed longer they might have found out—the individual approached them as I have said before. He said shots were fired. The crew, feeling the mission was accomplished and there was no danger to anyone, decided to leave in the interests of not provoking a confrontation.

* * *

*[Translation]***TAXATION**

Mr. René Laurin (Joliette): Mr. Speaker, we hear all sorts of terrible rumours about the intentions of the Minister of Finance who, it seems, wants to pick the pockets of Canadian taxpayers again.

My question is for the Minister of National Revenue. Does he not think that he should ask the Minister of Finance to spare the already overtaxed middle class and reach instead for the more well-to-do?

[English]

Hon. Douglas Peters (Secretary of State (International Financial Institutions)): Mr. Speaker, a question regarding new taxes has been raised by the hon. member. The minister has previously stated in the House that the entire tax system is being reviewed with a view to getting greater fairness in the Canadian tax system.

I can assure the hon. member that when the budget comes down he will see there is a greater fairness in the tax system.

[Translation]

Mr. René Laurin (Joliette): Mr. Speaker, does the Minister of National Revenue not find unacceptable that the Minister of

Finance plans to make seniors the next victims of his tax increases while stubbornly refusing to abolish the tax breaks which benefit the rich of our society?

[English]

Hon. Douglas Peters (Secretary of State (International Financial Institutions)): Mr. Speaker, I have answered the question. We are examining fairness in the tax system and the Minister of Finance in his budget will look at those subjects.

* * *

VOTER'S RIGHTS

Mr. Ed Harper (Simcoe Centre): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister.

Is the Prime Minister now prepared to accept and act on the need for quick passage of legislation permitting voters the right to recall?

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I would like to inform the hon. member that this idea was tried once in 1936 by the Aberhart government in Alberta. One of the members of that government was the father of the leader of his party. A year later there was a petition to recall Mr. Aberhart himself. A law was then passed by the Aberhart government—Mr. Manning Sr. was a member of that government—to abolish the law retroactively so—

(1125)

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Chrétien (Saint-Maurice): —if the hon. member has the time he should call Mr. Manning in Calgary and ask him to have a little discussion with his father over the weekend and report to the House on Monday.

Mr. Ed Harper (Simcoe Centre): A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. I would point out to the Prime Minister that the right of recall belongs to citizens in many other democratic jurisdictions.

Will the Prime Minister tell the House when he might consider responding to the wishes of millions of Canadians who believe that they should also have the right to recall MPs who fail to represent their interests or who betray their interests or who misrepresent themselves to the people?

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, there are two elements I would like the hon. member to consider. It will cost money to have an election every time the people are not happy with their member. Suppose they were to recall the whole Reform Party, perhaps right away. I will look at the proposition to see if it is a sensible.

I would like to have some information from Mr. Manning Sr. They tried it and it did not work. When a government is in power, that government has to make some tough decisions. If

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there is to be a recall it comes four years later when there is another election. That is the democratic process.

I meet a lot of Canadians. Many of the candidates for my party who were defeated tell me that if they had a chance today to run in an election they might do very well in some of the ridings that elected Reform members. Unfortunately we do not have recall and for the stability of Parliament is it a good idea?

There was an incident in this House and the member is no longer a member of our party. Incidents of the same nature occurred in the past with every party in this House. I do not think it is a very practical idea. Again, I repeat, that English precedents are very important in common law, and the precedent occurred within the Manning family.

Mr. Ed Harper (Simcoe Centre): A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker.

If the Prime Minister is not prepared to support recall, how does he propose to restore voters' confidence and their respect for their Parliament?

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, that is exactly what we are doing. We have done a lot of things to bring back respect for this institution. One of the ways we have done it, for example, happened in the House this week. Everybody says the mood is much better, there are fewer catcalls, or whatever, from members.

We have had two debates of a type that did not exist before; one on Bosnia and the other on the cruise missile. Everybody, including the leader of your party and the Leader of the Official Opposition and the leader of the NDP all congratulated the government for its initiative in bringing back respect to this institution.

We will undertake many more measures like that in order to gain back the confidence that this House deserves from the Canadian people.

The Speaker: I know that the Prime Minister, being a veteran of many years in this House, will always direct his comments to the Chair and I really appreciate it.

* * *

[Translation]

SOCIAL HOUSING

Mrs. Monique Guay (Laurentides): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Public Works. Since 1986, the federal government has steadily withdrawn from the social and co-operative housing sector, leaving the poorest of our society in totally unacceptable housing conditions.

Does the minister intend to fulfil the commitments he made during the last election campaign by establishing non-profit social and co-operative housing programs?

[English]

Hon. David Dingwall (Minister of Public Works and Government Services and Minister for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency): Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for her important question.

(1130)

I had a meeting with ministers of housing across the country. We discussed their concerns as they relate to social housing. However I remind the hon. member that social housing is not only the jurisdiction of the Government of Canada but also provincial governments, municipalities and other stakeholders.

We are providing \$100 million over a two-year period under RRAP to provide some needed assistance for low income Canadians. We have fiscal restraint and fiscal measures with which we have to deal, along with provincial governments and municipalities. Within that framework, we will try to arrive at some moneys.

I do not want to mislead the hon. member into thinking that large sums of money are readily available to go to the issue that she raises here today.

[Translation]

Mrs. Monique Guay (Laurentides): Mr. Speaker, will the minister agree that not only do social housing programs contribute to improving living conditions of low income families but that a renewal of investment in social housing could also contribute to overall economic recovery?

[English]

Hon. David Dingwall (Minister of Public Works and Government Services and Minister for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is quite correct.

I had discussions with the minister of housing in the province of Quebec regarding the possibility of consummating a deal between the Government of Canada and the province of Quebec so that we may be able to piggy-back, if you will, some moneys we have to facilitate greater investments in that province and get a better bang for the dollar both provincially and federally.

My discussions with the minister, Mr. Ryan, are continuing and I hope to be able to have something in the very near future that will contribute to that objective.

* * *

AUDITOR GENERAL'S REPORT

Mr. Stephen Harper (Calgary West): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister and also concerns democratic reform.

In his annual report, the Auditor General identified the confidence convention as a major stumbling block in the reform of the budgetary process.

Oral Questions

In view of the government's commitment to carefully examine and consider the Auditor General's recommendations, will the Prime Minister inform the House that he will relax the confidence convention and allow free votes in the upcoming budget?

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, this has nothing to do with how one makes a budget.

Voting after the budget is one thing. How to prepare a budget is something else. If the Minister of Finance reveals what he will do while preparing the budget, he would be forced to resign.

Some ministers in England have had to resign. In Canada there have been a few controversies because there were indications of what was to happen. Some people might buy shares or speculate on what the government will do.

Confidentiality is to make sure that nobody profits from the upcoming budget through speculation. We have to do that, otherwise somebody can get rich at the expense of the work of this House.

Mr. Stephen Harper (Calgary West): Mr. Speaker, with all due respect to the Prime Minister I am asking about the confidence convention and not confidentiality.

[*Translation*]

My supplementary question is for the Prime Minister. In his report the Auditor General said that Canadians want to feel that members of Parliament may vote freely, and they expect more free votes. How does the government intend to respond to that feeling regarding free vote and streamline the budget process?

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, the issue of confidence in the government's budget policy is a fundamental one for any Parliament. If members were allowed to vote freely on parts of the budget, we would no longer have a government. The government must assume its responsibilities; it is up to the House to decide whether or not it has confidence in the government. No one is obliged to vote for the government. Even on this side, we have seen people do so. But, if they bring the government down, they know full well that elections will be called immediately after. I believe that the budget issue is a question of confidence in the government. The budget is first discussed with MPs, but once the Minister of Finance has tabled a budget approved by cabinet, it becomes a fundamental question of confidence in the government.

* * *

(1135)

QUEBEC CITY AIRPORT

Mr. Philippe Paré (Louis-Hébert): My question is for the Minister of Transport.

Citing economic reasons, the Department of Transport decided in 1984 to close the radar control facility at the Quebec City airport, in spite of a 15-year long struggle for recognition of the right to work in French in Quebec air space.

So far, the department has been unable to break the will of those who work in this area and the radar control facility is still in operation.

Since this decision was made by the former Conservative government, is the minister prepared to overturn it, just as his government overturned the decision in the case of Pearson airport in Toronto?

Hon. Douglas Young (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, the question raised by my hon. colleague obviously relates mainly to security and the ability to be understood in one's own language.

Let me assure the hon. member that these two criteria will always be met in so far as the service at the Quebec City airport is concerned.

Mr. Philippe Paré (Louis-Hébert): Mr. Speaker, since economic reasons were cited for this decision, has the minister considered closing other radar control facilities located in closer proximity to their regional control centres, as is the case in Ottawa and Calgary?

Hon. Douglas Young (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, we are now in the process of reviewing the country's entire air traffic control system. I can assure my hon. colleague that the same criteria will be applied, whether it be in Quebec City, Calgary, Moncton or Vancouver.

* * *

[*English*]

INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAM

Mr. Ken Epp (Elk Island): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister responsible for Infrastructure. The infrastructure program as proposed obligates the provinces and municipalities to match federal dollars.

Since all provinces, many municipalities and certainly the federal government are burdened with an immense long-term debt, does the minister have any plans to treat with fairness those municipalities who choose not to add to the debt load of the taxpayers by not participating in the program?

Hon. Arthur C. Eggleton (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure): Mr. Speaker, there is no obligation on the part of any municipality to participate in this program. But I must tell him that we are inundated with requests from municipalities for information because they want to be a part of the program.

In their meeting with the Prime Minister on December 21 the 10 provincial premiers agreed to participate in this program.

Oral Questions

They all want to be a part of it because they recognize the synergistic effect of bringing together three levels of government, and providing these infrastructure programs will help get people to work now.

Mr. Ken Epp (Elk Island): Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. My colleagues and I were elected largely because we represent the conviction that reduced government spending leading to reduced debt and reduced taxes is the real way to generate increased economic activity and produce ongoing prosperity and jobs.

What answer does the minister have for my constituents who are adamantly opposed to more government borrowing?

Hon. Arthur C. Eggleton (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure): Mr. Speaker, we are not going to borrow more money to produce our \$2 billion for this program.

We have said time and time again, and it is in the red book if the hon. member wants to refer to that document, that we will do it through reallocation. We are not going to add to the debt. We are not going to add to government spending. We are going to reallocate because we believe that getting people back to work is a high priority and it is a matter of setting high priorities.

* * *

[Translation]

INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Mr. Maurice Bernier (Mégantic—Compton—Stanstead): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs.

Members from both sides of the House undoubtedly remember the now famous Charlottetown saga that led to the October 26, 1992 referendum. In Quebec, that referendum was held pursuant to Quebec's Referendum Act.

The previous government made a commitment to reimburse the Government of Quebec for the cost of the referendum, namely \$26 million.

Can the Minister tell this House whether he has honoured the previous government's commitment to reimburse this \$26 million? If not, can he tell us what is happening with the negotiations on this?

Hon. Marcel Massé (President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister responsible for Public Service Renewal): Mr. Speaker, if I understand correctly the background to this question, I do

not believe that the previous government made a formal commitment to reimburse these costs.

(1140)

Mr. Maurice Bernier (Mégantic—Compton—Stanstead): Mr. Speaker, the minister should check this statement. Whether there was a commitment or not, and we maintain that the previous government did indeed make such a commitment, would it not be fair to reimburse Quebec since Quebecers have already paid through their taxes for about a quarter of the cost of the referendum held in the rest of Canada?

Hon. Marcel Massé (President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister responsible for Public Service Renewal): Mr. Speaker, I will certainly check the records to see whether the previous Prime Minister gave his agreement, but I am confident that there was no formal agreement.

We are still reviewing the request from the Government of Quebec. There are a number of legal precedents to consider, in particular a case indicating that when the Quebec government decided to hold its own referendum within the province, it also had to assume all related responsibilities. This issue is still under study and we will be able to give a more detailed answer soon.

* * *

[English]

THE ECONOMY

Mr. John Bryden (Hamilton—Wentworth): Mr. Speaker, I have good news for the House. The Conference Board of Canada has released its index of business confidence which as members know is regarded as a leading indicator of economic activity.

The index shows a jump of 10 per cent to a level of 150.8 for the final quarter of 1993, bringing the index to its highest level since the first quarter of 1989.

My question is directed to the acting Minister of Finance. Can Canadians consider this most welcome news as a harbinger of the end of the recession?

Hon. Douglas Peters (Secretary of State (International Financial Institutions)): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question from the hon. member for Hamilton—Wentworth. It allows me to state that this indeed is good news and that there will be some substantial improvement in the economic standing of this country. It is clear that the government's commitment to implement its infrastructure program, its commitment to develop the Canada investment fund and to improve the access to capital by small and medium size business has been very well received by the business community in this country.

IMMIGRATION

Mrs. Sharon Hayes (Port Moody—Coquitlam): Mr. Speaker, this is not about such good news. The people of Port Moody—Coquitlam are demanding answers. Michael Drake, a convicted child molester, has once again been released into our community.

Drake was charged in 1992 with sexually assaulting a two and a half year old girl in Bellingham, Washington. He jumped bail and was convicted in absentia.

Drake has just been released until his deportation case resumes on February 16. Until then a menace to our community is free to come and go as he wishes.

My question is for the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration. Being ultimately responsible for this case, what course of action does the hon. member plan to take in order to ensure that this convicted child molester is immediately deported?

Hon. Sergio Marchi (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I just want to share with the member and the House the frustration we all feel when individuals such as the one the member mentions pursue access to immigration programs.

I want to assure the member and all Canadians that this government will have a fair and progressive immigration policy. But to be fair and progressive we must be tough in applying the law across the board so individuals who are a threat to the community, to Canadians or to the system clearly do not fall through the loopholes.

I assure the hon. member that I will use all the powers granted to me under the Immigration Act, remembering the fact that privacy laws preclude me from going into specific details of this case or any other case.

(1145)

Mrs. Sharon Hayes (Port Moody—Coquitlam): Mr. Speaker, would the minister please respond with a yes or a no as to whether he will discuss this case with the U.S. authorities and demand that they have Michael Drake immediately extradited.

Hon. Sergio Marchi (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I understand the concern of the hon. member and the party she represents.

I want to reassure her that this government and this minister feel equally as passionately about defending our borders and our system.

However, privacy laws preclude me from entering into a debate as the hon. member wishes me to do. I simply reiterate my concern and the shared feeling of frustration and indignation many Canadians feel. While it is a minority of the cases in the

Oral Questions

overall program let me reassure the hon. member that since my appointment to this position I have moved quietly to deport individuals I feel have contravened the law and are not in the best interests of Canada.

I will continue where meritorious to do that, but I do not want to enter into areas of debate that our privacy laws preclude me and other members from doing.

* * *

[Translation]

GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURES

Mr. Richard Bélisle (La Prairie): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the President of the Treasury Board.

We recently learned that, over the past five years, the federal government spent millions of dollars, some \$85 million to be exact and an estimated \$18 million in 1992–93 alone, on a series of promotional videos on windsurfing safety, life as a Canadian forces officer and searching for Santa Claus, to name a few. You will agree with me that such a waste of public funds is really unacceptable in view of the pitiful state of government finances.

My question is as follows: Is the President of the Treasury Board prepared to give this House the assurance that, since taking office, the new Liberal government has put a stop to such squandering of public funds?

[English]

Hon. Arthur C. Eggleton (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure): Mr. Speaker, I am not going to give a ho ho ho to that question.

I assure the hon. member that I will look into those various areas of expenditure that the past government has inflicted upon the people of this country that are indeed wasteful.

Something we want to be a hallmark of this government is frugality in expenditure. We want to ensure that we get value for the taxpayers' dollars and that we spend those taxpayers' dollars efficiently and effectively and not in a wasteful fashion.

It is very important in terms of the programs this government wants to put forward. I assure the hon. member I will look into the matters he has specifically raised today.

[Translation]

Mr. Richard Bélisle (La Prairie): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplemental. Considering that each dollar saved by trimming government spending is in fact \$1 that can be applied against provincial health and education costs, what would the President of the Treasury Board think of an in-depth review of all government spending, item by item, to be carried out by a committee of this House?

*Oral Questions**[English]*

Hon. Arthur C. Eggleton (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure): Mr. Speaker, the estimates will be presented to this House after the Minister of Finance presents his budget.

There will be opportunities at that point to look at all the expenditure levels with respect to the kinds of programs and services the government provides.

Again I would assure the hon. member that all of us in this House on all sides have the interest of ensuring frugality with respect to government expenditures and the efficiency and effectiveness of using the taxpayers' dollars.

I welcome his intervention and desire to play a part in making sure that happens and I am sure we will work together to achieve that.

* * *

LEADERS' SALARIES

Mr. Bob Ringma (Nanaimo—Cowichan): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister.

The Ottawa *Sun* reports this morning that the Prime Minister and leaders of the other two parties that once existed in this House struck a secret deal so that they could continue receiving their extra salaries after the writ was dropped last year right through the election campaign. Normally any extra salary over and above the basic MP salary is cut off when the writ is dropped.

(1150)

Will the Prime Minister explain to outraged Canadians this abuse of their tax dollars and make public a repayment schedule of those tax dollars paid to him as a result of this secret deal?

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister): I would like to say to the hon. member that before talking about a deal he should have some proof.

I never heard about it. I was campaigning. I received the payments that the governor sent to me. I do not know what the precedents were on that but there was no deal. Nobody ever talked to me.

To reflect on the leader of the NDP suggesting that she was part of a deal or that I sat down with the Prime Minister to make a deal is absolutely false. It should be withdrawn. There was no deal and we received our payments as usual.

For myself, I do not know what the precedents are and nobody ever talked to me about it. If it was not right, I would be delighted to pay it back. But to imply that there is something wrong and impute motives as the member does to the leader of the NDP is completely wrong. For myself, I was not even aware there was a problem.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

An hon. member: It is wrong.

Mrs. Finestone: Sit down. Show a little respect.

Mr. Marchi: What about the first question.

Mr. Chrétien (Saint-Maurice): Shame on you.

The Speaker: Order. The question posed which I permitted the Prime Minister to answer should have been answered by the representative of the Board of Internal Economy.

With what transpired during the campaign, I do not have any information that anything untoward transpired, but if the hon. member has a question in this vein again, I would direct the question to the representative of the Board of Internal Economy who is in the House now.

Mr. Bob Ringma (Nanaimo—Cowichan): Mr. Speaker, may I then as a supplementary ask the representative of this committee to furnish an explanation to this House in the forthcoming week?

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Solicitor General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the spokesman for the committee, the member for Saint-Léonard, I would like to inform the House that I have obtained information.

I am informed that what the then commissioners of internal economy did before the last election was based on precedents dating back for several elections and there is nothing different or untoward.

Therefore I think the hon. member should withdraw totally his allegations and innuendoes which are totally unfounded and mistaken.

The Speaker: I would like to get advice on this for myself. I will be discussing this with my clerks and I will make a statement on this the next time the House sits.

* * *

TOBACCO

Mr. Bob Speller (Haldimand—Norfolk): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of National Revenue.

The minister met yesterday with representatives of Grand River Enterprises, the Assembly of First Nations and the people of the Six Nations of the Grand River regarding a tobacco manufacturing licence that they requested to help create 200 jobs in my riding.

I am wondering when the minister might be in a position to let my constituents and this House know when these people might be getting their manufacturing licence.

Hon. David Anderson (Minister of National Revenue): Mr. Speaker, it is certainly correct that the group, Grand River Enterprises, has applied for a licence and that it is under consideration at the present time. They applied on January 7. There was some information lacking. We have asked for more precise details.

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I met with the group yesterday. I believe we had a useful and productive meeting. However I am in no position at the present time to announce that a licence will or will not be granted. Within two and a half weeks would be the time I would expect. My officials however assure me these things sometimes take longer than ministers expect. They say it could possibly take a week longer than that.

* * *

(1155)

*[Translation]***ALUMINUM INDUSTRY**

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

The aluminum industry is presently going through a crisis brought about by massive selling of Russian aluminum on the world market. Producing countries are trying, so far without success, to reach an agreement with the Russians. In the event of failure, Americans might impose countervailing duties on imports from all countries. Our industry, which employs 20,000 workers in Quebec and Canada, exports 75 per cent of its output to the United States. Countervailing duties would have disastrous consequences for the industry.

My question is this: Given the importance of this industry in Quebec and Canada, what measures is the government going to take to prevent a confrontation between the various aluminum producing countries?

Hon. John Manley (Minister of Industry): Mr. Speaker, we are well aware of the problems in the aluminum industry. Many companies are affected in Quebec as well as Canada. We are hoping that the talks that are going on in Brussels right now will come to a favourable conclusion.

[English]

There will be a continuation of the discussions with respect to an international accord on aluminum. It is our hope that voluntary reduction in Russian exports will be the outcome of these discussions.

[Translation]

Mr. André Caron (Jonquière): A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Some aluminum producing plants in Canada are presently importing cheap Russian aluminum, then upgrading it for resale on the international market.

Is the minister contemplating the possibility of imposing countervailing duties on such imports of aluminum into Canada?

Hon. John Manley (Minister of Industry): Mr. Speaker, this is purely speculative. At the present time, we are still hoping for an international agreement, and this is the favoured solution.

*[English]***IMMIGRATION AND REFUGEE BOARD**

Mr. Darrel Stinson (Okanagan—Shuswap): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration. On January 26 the government advised this House and the Canadian people that when it made 33 appointments to the Immigration and Refugee Board, members of my party applauded. This is not correct. My party did not support any such appointments.

In the recent election campaign all recognized parties in this House ran on platforms promising to eliminate excess patronage.

Could the minister explain how his decision in this case was any different from those made by the previous government?

Hon. Sergio Marchi (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, if the member checks the statements of some of his hon. colleagues, he will find the facts to be very different.

Also, it was unprecedented. The positions for the Immigration and Refugee Board were gazetted and 300 applications were received. For the first time ever I had the chairman of the Immigration and Refugee Board evaluate all 300 individuals. Any other resumes that came through my office or the Prime Minister's office or from members of Parliament on both sides were sent to the same Immigration and Refugee Board chairman for evaluation.

We consulted with non-governmental organizations, lawyers and various advocates. If the hon. member looks at the comments, not by members of my government but by members of communities across the country, they were applauding that for the first time government has kept a promise. Our Prime Minister promised that we would reintroduce integrity and confidence as the benchmarks for appointments not only to the Immigration and Refugee Board but also to the other boards and commissions under this Parliament and this government.

* * *

*[Translation]***NATIONAL DEFENCE**

Mr. Gaston Leroux (Richmond—Wolfe): Mr. Speaker, a little earlier during Question Period the Prime Minister referred to two debates.

In fact, last Tuesday there was a constructive debate in this House on the situation in Bosnia. However, the government did not take advantage of this debate to put forward its own position, and we still do not know whether the government is in favour of maintaining Canadian troops in Bosnia or endorses a unilateral

Tribute

withdrawal, as the Prime Minister suggested just before he left for Europe two weeks ago.

My question is directed to the Minister of National Defence: Can the minister tell us in the House today what the government's position is on our peacekeepers in Bosnia?

(1200)

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, we had a debate on the subject in the House. We listened to the views of hon. members, and we are to make a decision by the end of March, when we will have to renew our mandates. We have two mandates, one expiring in March and the other in April, and we have to make a decision.

In light of this debate, which was very useful and demonstrated the problems that exist, the government will analyse the situation and we will make our decision in due time, but there is no hurry for the time being.

We are monitoring the situation very closely. In fact, thanks to the progress made since our visit to Brussels, Canadian troops stationed in the Srebrenica enclave are about to be replaced by Danish troops. Everything is all right for the time being, and a decision will be made at the appropriate time.

Mr. Gaston Leroux (Richmond—Wolfe): Mr. Speaker, from the newspapers we can see that Canadian troops in Bosnia are experiencing serious problems. However, during the debate, the Bloc Québécois and the Reform Party made their positions clear. I would like to ask the Prime Minister why he is reluctant to adopt a clear and unambiguous position on this matter.

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I just informed the hon. member that the debate ended this week and that it was a useful debate. Before making this kind of decision, we also have to consult with our allies who are over there. The hon. member's party supported maintaining troops in Bosnia, and we appreciate their position. One thing is clear: we intend to finish our mandates, one of which expires at the end of March and the other in April. This means we have plenty of time to make a decision. We are in touch daily with our allies who also have troops stationed in that troubled part of the world, and we intend to make a decision at the appropriate time, by the end of March.

* * *

[English]

HOUSING SUBSIDIES

Ms. Val Meredith (Surrey—White Rock—South Langley): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Solicitor General.

In the mid-1980s, in response to spiralling house costs in the greater Toronto area, both the RCMP and CSIS introduced a housing subsidy or commuting allowance for its employees. These subsidies are still being paid today. However for the past

two or three years the cost of housing in the Toronto area has been considerably less than in the greater Vancouver region. Yet neither the RCMP nor CSIS employees in Vancouver are eligible for any subsidies.

Will the minister either eliminate the subsidy if it is no longer needed or at least ensure that all employees of these agencies are treated in a fair and equitable manner?

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Solicitor General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for her question. I will be happy to take it as notice, get further information and get back to her about it as quickly as possible.

* * *

PRIVILEGE

CORRECTION OF ANSWER

Hon. Marcel Massé (President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister responsible for Public Service Renewal): Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday last during Question Period, as reported at page 300 of *Hansard*, in response to a question from the hon. member for Wild Rose I stated:

—I was asked to give a conference at Harvard University—on very short notice.

What I should have said was that the events surrounding the planning of trips were unfolding rapidly and made it necessary to adjust my travel arrangements very quickly.

It was never my intention to mislead the House and I regret any inaccuracy in my previous answer.

* * *

[Translation]

THE LATE JEAN-LOUIS LEDUC

Mr. Louis Plamondon (Richelieu): Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a few moments in this House to pay tribute to Jean-Louis Leduc, who was the member for Richelieu from 1979 to 1984. Mr. Leduc was a close friend and an unconditional supporter of the present Prime Minister. I recall that he was a zealous participant in my riding in the leadership races involving the Prime Minister.

(1205)

Mr. Leduc was my main opponent in 1984. I must admit that it was a tough fight, but a battle of ideas, with a man who had the greatest respect for others. He had political opponents but no enemies. He died during the last election campaign following a long illness.

I also knew him well as a teacher. We both taught at the Fernand Lefebvre Comprehensive School. He was a wonderful communicator and a matchless storyteller. He knew how to give his teaching a regional touch and to convey to his students his affection for the beautiful Sorel-Tracy region and the whole

Richelieu constituency. Jean-Louis had his own style and always found a way to deal humorously with a serious subject.

I remember meeting him before the election. He had been in the opposition for nine months and then he was campaigning again. He came to say hello to us at the school and I asked him, since we were great friends: "Well, Jean-Louis, will you have a special strategy for this election campaign, since it is taking place in winter, in February?" He said: "Yes, I will put on long underwear". That answer shows his style, always humorous. He was also an outstanding communicator with his friends and with his students.

I will never forget my last visit to him, during the referendum on the Charlottetown accord. I had a chance to spend nearly half an hour with him and his wife and I greatly admired his courage and determination in going to vote. Even though he had trouble moving, he insisted on doing his duty as a voter, and that referendum was the last time he was able to vote.

I would like to offer my sincerest condolences to the Right Hon. Prime Minister, to his colleagues in the Liberal Party, to his wife and to his son.

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, Mr. Leduc was a member here, for a few months in the opposition and then on the government side. He was a wise man and, as his successor said, a most pleasant companion. I doubt that many members in this House were as friendly with everyone. He was not very partisan. He was a good supporter but not the kind to pick a fight. He was very dedicated and had a particular wisdom. He was perhaps a little more mature than some, and every time he spoke, both in this House and in caucus, he was always wise, thoughtful and reasonable. I think that he served well the people of the Sorel region, the hon. member's riding, and also that he served his community well both as an elected member and before. When he passed on I am sure that those who knew him very well had the feeling that a gentleman had just left this world.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Bob Ringma (Nanaimo—Cowichan): Mr. Speaker, in recognition of Mr. Leduc's service to Parliament, we would like to send our regrets and extend our deepest sympathies to Mrs. Leduc, their son Michel and the entire family.

Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier): Mr. Speaker, I knew Jean-Louis when he served in this House from 1979 to 1984 and I would like to remember him briefly.

He was a great believer in oral tradition, someone who liked to recount the history not only of his region but of his country.

Routine Proceedings

He had a rather difficult childhood. He was orphaned at an early age and had to work very hard. Jean-Louis had one ambition in life, namely to become a member of this House, and he fulfilled this goal in 1979.

(1210)

Like the Prime Minister, I too remember very well that he was a great storyteller. His stories related to everyday events and could be told in public. He could capture an audience's attention because he was a great communicator and had a great ability to convey ideas.

A staunch federalist and Liberal supporter, Jean-Louis was always ready to espouse the federalist cause. I recall that during the 1980 referendum he was very active in his riding and worked hard here in caucus for the no side.

He had been a teacher once and had been actively involved in the church, in his region and in his community. I remember that he was criticized once for securing the funding needed to paint some of the churches in his riding. He was criticized, mainly by those in opposition at the time, for using federal funds for this purpose. I wondered if Jean-Louis should really have been criticized for creating jobs in his region, jobs involving renovations and church repairs.

In conclusion, I would like to convey my deepest sympathies to his wife Réjeanne and to their son Michel. On behalf of my colleagues in the Liberal caucus and all those who knew him, I wish his family well. May they find comfort in the knowledge that their lives have been enriched by this great man who served as the member for Richelieu.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[*Translation*]

PETITIONS

SOCIAL HOUSING

Mr. Roger Pomerleau (Anjou—Rivière-des-Prairies): Mr. Speaker, I wish to table a petition signed by people from my riding and particularly by residents of the Pierre-Bernard Tower and 6400 Duquesne Street.

The petition states: "The undersigned ask Parliament to forego any social housing rent increases and to lift the freeze on the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation's budget to allow for the building of new social and co-op housing."

The Address

[English]

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

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

The Speaker: Shall all questions stand?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

SPEECH FROM THE THRONE

RESUMPTION OF DEBATE ON ADDRESS IN REPLY

The House resumed consideration of the motion for an address to His Excellency the Governor General in reply to his Speech at the opening of the session.

The Speaker: The member for Comox—Alberni has the floor with seven minutes remaining.

Mr. Bill Gilmour (Comox—Alberni): Mr. Speaker, I would request that I be allowed the full 10 minutes to carry on with my debate as the first portion of my debate will have been forgotten by all the members in the House.

The Speaker: I believe we are going to remember the first three minutes as they were excellently presented. I know the hon. member will just take his seven minutes as allocated.

(1215)

Mr. Gilmour: Mr. Speaker, I would like to address some concerns shared by many Canadians of anticipated actions by this government regarding natural resources. In particular, there are the issues concerning forestry and the environment.

Forest products are not only British Columbia's main export but Canada's as well. Forestry is Canada's number one industry to which many members here will be able to attest. For example in British Columbia the forest sector provided 270,000 jobs, paid \$2.4 billion in taxes and exported \$11 billion of products in 1992.

However, the forest sector is facing losses both in jobs and in profits and will continue to do so until a balance is struck between forest conservation and forest preservation.

In the throne speech the government stated its commitment to jobs and to sustainable development. The government is to be commended for this initiative. However, I have some difficulty

with statements made prior to and during the election campaign regarding these issues.

To give some background, on April 13, 1993 the government of British Columbia announced the long awaited land use decision for the Clayoquot Sound area on the west coast of Vancouver Island, an area within my riding.

The provincial government made a very difficult but well balanced decision that enhances environmental, economic and social values for the area. However, I find it disturbing that before and during the election campaign last fall the Liberal government on several occasions stated that if elected it may expand the boundaries of Pacific Rim National Park to include the Clayoquot.

I find this disturbing from a number of points of view. The first is the lengthy and involved process utilized to arrive at the Clayoquot decision itself.

During the 1980s it was recognized by many that the level of logging in and around the Clayoquot was too high and was not sustainable. In an attempt to balance all resource uses in the Clayoquot, a community based steering committee was established and charged with formulating a sustainable development plan for the area. The steering committee had a broad base. It included mayors of the three communities involved, native groups, environmentalists, logging companies, unions and several provincial ministries.

When the three-year Clayoquot Sound process ended there was general agreement on most aspects of the strategy. On the contentious issue of land allocation, namely the creation of new parks with a subsequent reduction in area available for logging, 10 of the 13 groups at the table reached a consensus.

This consensus allowed for a doubling of the area to be set aside or to be preserved. It is a reduction of the area available for logging from the previous 81 per cent to less than 45 per cent. This consensus now ensures that 55 per cent or more than half of the old growth forest in the sound will remain unlogged forever.

This is a made in B.C. decision. It is a decision made by British Columbians about resources that are clearly under the jurisdiction of British Columbia. I ask the Liberal government now to respect that decision.

This issue extends beyond regional concerns and as such I strongly encourage the hon. Minister of the Environment to familiarize herself with the process that was used to arrive at a decision because I firmly believe the same open and public process can be used in other contentious areas to arrive at a consensual decision.

I request that the government give credence and support toward such a balanced process when considering controversial land use for environmental issues.

The Address

Another point that I find disturbing concerns jobs. In the Clayoquot, as a result of the compromise decision, there has already been a loss of over 600 forest sector direct and indirect jobs. During the recent election the government ran a very successful campaign built around the issue of jobs and it is to be congratulated.

However, my concern now is whether this government should proceed on a path of including the Clayoquot within Pacific Rim National Park. The impact on the forest sector alone would amount to a loss of 4,200 direct and indirect forest sector jobs.

(1220)

On October 25 the Canadian public made it abundantly clear what action it will take collectively toward governments that do not live up to their promises and in this case jobs. I would suggest that the Canadian public and in particular the constituents within my riding of Comox—Alberni would be more than upset with a government that campaigned on a platform of creation of jobs and then once elected immediately did a complete about face and put 4,200 people out of work. Frankly this would be a most unwise decision on the part of the government.

Another area requiring consideration should this government proceed with expanding Pacific Rim National Park is one of compensation to the province of British Columbia. I am sure we are aware that natural resources, in this case timber, belong not to the federal government but to the province.

Therefore should this government proceed with what would amount to expropriation of the timber resource within the Clayoquot, while at the same time bearing in mind that the provincial government would be most unlikely to enter into an agreement that would cost the government lost revenue, the federal government would then owe the provincial government compensation. Lost stumpage revenue in the Clayoquot will be substantial. It would be roughly \$2 billion. That is not \$2 million but \$2 billion.

At a time when the federal government is deeply in debt I believe that Canadians would have great difficulty in understanding the wisdom and logic of a government that commits an additional \$2 billion to expand an already existing and large national park.

Finally I would like to address the subject of forest practices within the Clayoquot. There is no question that the Clayoquot decision involves the nature and extent of logging. The way logging was carried out a decade ago is no longer acceptable to many people. As a result the province of British Columbia is currently in the process of implementing a new forest practices code which will change the way that logging is carried out in British Columbia.

This new code will substantially reduce the size and extent of clear cuts, allow for green up before adjacent areas can be logged, ensure reforestation is promptly carried out, monitor road building practices and ensure that streams are not—

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): Your time has expired. I open the session to questions and comments.

[Translation]

Mr. Philippe Paré (Louis-Hébert): Madam Speaker, I am glad that some things the hon. member for Comox—Alberni said give me an opportunity to participate in the debate.

Quite rightly, he invited the government to try to maintain a balance between the protection of forested areas and economic development. In theory, I think, we recognize that some forested areas must be preserved because of the very important regulating role that forests play in our environment.

However, on a more local basis, we sometimes forget the principles put forward in our theoretical debates. It is always difficult to find the right balance between forest preservation and economic growth. We tend to give up hope and to get emotional when we talk about deforestation in the Amazon. We blame Brazil for not protecting its forests, but here in Canada, we also put aside environmental considerations when faced with economic problems. I invite the government to always try to keep the right balance between forest conservation and economic development.

[English]

Mr. Gilmour: Madam Speaker, I can only agree with the member. I believe the biggest thing that this country faces is how we do a land use allocation of our many resources. I believe this is paramount. We should be finding out which areas are the best to preserve, which are the best for urban development and which are the best for agriculture. If we do not have this land use allocation and decisions then we get these piecemeal environmental debates that tend to tear this country apart. This is a wonderful country and across it are many different ecosystems. We need to have an allocation that puts a priority on each area so that this country is all protected.

(1225)

Mr. John Finlay (Oxford): Madam Speaker, I appreciate the speech of the hon. member and his concern for a balanced approach to forest resources.

However at one point he said that timber resources belong to B.C. and not the federal government which obviously represents the people of this country. Technically under the British North America Act my hon. friend is correct.

The facts of the concerns raised by groups in this country with respect to Clayoquot would indicate that a great many people in Canada share the idea of our aboriginal peoples that the land does not belong to anybody. It belongs to all of us.

The Address

I think my hon. friend cannot have it both ways. He cannot reserve the timber resources of B.C. and ask for compensation if we consider that the mines and factories of Ontario and so on, as have other industries in B.C., contributed to the federal treasury and contributed to the well being of all Canadians

Mr. Gilmour: Madam Speaker, the member is correct that under the British North America Act resources belong to the province. However they do not belong to the province, they belong to the people within that province.

We are talking about the allocation of natural resources. It goes back to what I was saying. We have to strike a balance. If we do not strike a balance then we are putting one segment of society against another. We need to find the land use balance.

Hon. Sheila Finestone (Secretary of State (Multiculturalism) (Status of Women)): Madam Speaker, at the outset I really would like to congratulate you on your accession to the throne, as we put it. As my friend and my colleague and as someone who I know will bring dignity and respect to the chair and to the role you are playing, I wish you well, good health, and good judgment. I would like you to accept the sincere wishes of all your colleagues in that regard.

As we begin this new mandate and at a time when I am entrusted with new and challenging responsibilities, my first thoughts go to my fellow citizens in Mount Royal and I wish to express to them my deepest respect. Once again they have put their trust in me to represent them in this House and I want to thank them for their support, confidence and friendship.

[*Translation*]

It is an honour for me to represent the riding of Mount Royal in this distinguished place. Mount Royal will be the focus of my daily activities for the next four years as it was during my first two mandates.

Just looking around me in this House, I can tell how much change there has been and how much progress we have made. The people of Canada have chosen to represent them men and women from a variety of political parties. The make-up of this House reflects much more accurately than before the sociological reality and rich diversity of our country.

When I was first elected to this House in 1984, I was one of only 26 women. Today, 53 women are sitting in this 35th Parliament and, I am proud to say, 36 of these women are from my party. There are still too few of us, but it is an improvement, a big improvement. Also, never in its history has this place seen such a varied and fascinating cross-section of races and cultures. This new reality is the result of several factors.

(1230)

First of all, I want to thank and to congratulate our Prime Minister who, in the last election, made it a point of honour to encourage and support the candidacy of women and members of ethnocultural communities. His resolve and tenacity have been rewarded.

[*English*]

We must also recognize the leadership of our Deputy Prime Minister, the member for Hamilton East, who has worked very hard to seek out and recruit women of great talent to represent Canadians in this House, and you will note that throughout the course of the next four years.

There is no doubt that the contribution of women and more members from different ethnocultural communities will bring a perspective to the proceedings of this Parliament that is more representative of the nation as a whole.

I must say that I am humbled and challenged by the responsibilities the Prime Minister has chosen to give me as Secretary of State for Multiculturalism and for the Status of Women. These new responsibilities fit well with my past experience as I have spent the better part of my life working for equality for all, for minority rights, for freedom of expression, for freedom of religion, for freedom of the press and more recently for the rights of linguistic minorities in Quebec and throughout the rest of Canada. I intend to continue these efforts as a Privy Councillor.

Madam Speaker, I became involved in politics somewhat like you did as a matter of fact, first in the voluntary sector and then moved on, because I believed that the political realm belonged to all citizens. It is here in this place that the policies are made that affect the lives of each and every one of the citizens of Canada.

Today, governments must deal with very complex issues, with change, but they must do that in partnership with Canadians. The accelerated pace of change in the ongoing process of global restructuring will have significant implications for all of us, and in particular for policymakers, as we sit in this House.

As we deal with the forces of change, one of the key elements that will need to be weighed and better managed at all levels will be that of the cultural mix and gender equation. We must ensure that the needs and concerns of women are integrated into the development of all our policies and programs and are reflected in our institutions. Women can and must be full partners in our society, both economically and socially.

We will reach that goal not only through legislative change and government initiatives but also through changes in the Canadian attitude, for each and every one of us have a contribution to make. Canada will continue to prosper only if we make full use of all our citizens.

The bottom line is building a fair partnership and working together. Our government is going to work with openness and with transparency. We will be accessible. As a matter of fact we are not going to need too many lobbyists. We will listen to Canadians and provide them with the means to be informed. We want them to be involved in the discussions and the decisions concerning every aspect of their lives.

Under past Liberal governments women have made great strides. This administration, under the strong leadership of the Prime Minister of Canada, is committed to building on that rich heritage. The willingness of the government to address the concerns of women is clearly reflected in the throne speech.

We know that Canadian women and men will not be satisfied with words alone. From now on we will simply put and follow a critical path, and that path is action, action and action.

(1235)

The speech from the throne is indeed our blueprint for action and change, with many positive initiatives for women. It sets out the early priorities from the red book for this session with specific legislation and specific initiatives to follow.

Economic independence is critical to women's equality and a strong economy is the key to that independence. We have therefore put job creation and economic growth at the forefront of our plan.

This government intends to build on the creativity and intellectual talents of all Canadians, women and men of all backgrounds, in furthering Canada's economic growth.

In the short term the infrastructure renewal program will create immediate direct and indirect jobs and long-lasting benefits for all Canadians. Women will be participants in and beneficiaries of the infrastructure program and will have a role to play in encouraging municipal infrastructure projects which include the physical improvement that women need for safe homes and safe streets.

I urge women to speak to the mayors—and, by the way, many of our cities have women sitting as mayors at their helm and some of those women now sit in the House of Commons—across this country about the selection of the projects.

[*Translation*]

The government will focus its efforts in the long term on small and medium sized businesses which account on their own for 85 per cent of the new jobs created in recent years. No less than 30 per cent of these businesses are run by women and their success rate is twice as high as that of their male counterparts. I do not want to brag, Mr. Speaker, this is the plain truth.

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It is also very important to realize the impact of our ethnocultural communities on small business. Thousands of entrepreneurs of all ethnic backgrounds start up small businesses. They work hard and, like women, they are innovative and their success rate is very high.

Not only have they created jobs for themselves, but they have also provided work for thousands and thousands of other Canadians. All the progressive initiatives the government is proposing in support of small business will inevitably go a long way to redress social injustices and promote equal opportunity for all Canadians.

For example, the throne speech provides for a training program for small business managers. We will also facilitate their access to the Canada investment fund and to the Canadian technology network. We are committed to reducing the regulatory and paper burden on small businesses.

[*English*]

Believe me, those are heavy and difficult obstacles to success.

[*Translation*]

The youth service corps and the national literacy program will help young women as well as young members of our ethnocultural communities acquire the required skills and experience to find a job and achieve financial independence.

[*English*]

I, and I think we in this House, believe in greater equality of social conditions for all Canadians. We will therefore be conducting a review of our social security system to ensure that it is responsive to the economic and social realities of the 1990s.

I will work with my cabinet colleagues to ensure that the voices of women, immigrants and visible minorities are heard in these consultations on the modernization and restructuring of our collective social security system and in the job market.

I am, as I believe all my colleagues in this House are, deeply committed, certainly on our side of the benches anyway, to the principles of the Canada health care system and so is our government. The national forum on health, chaired by the Prime Minister, will provide an opportunity for Canadians to be involved in a national dialogue on the future of our health care system. There is ample evidence that our system has not given sufficient attention to women's health issues. I know you will agree with this, Madam Speaker. That will change now. We will work with all our partners to create a system that includes a greater focus on the health and well-being of Canadian women in the context of women's different attachment to the work market, their social and economic reality.

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(1240)

The centre of excellence for women's health and the Canada prenatal nutritional program are two immediate initiatives that will have an impact on women's health.

All it takes is an orange, an egg and a quart of milk to make sure that low birth babies do not become more and more a part of the problems that women have to face in this society. It costs very little to see that the situation is improved.

A major preoccupation for Canadians is violence. In particular, violence against women and children concerns us all. Addressing all types of violence is a priority for our government.

On November 18 I announced the results of a federal study conducted by Statistics Canada which revealed that 51 per cent of women had in their adult lifetime been victimized by a man. Those of us who have worked with women and within women's groups have long suspected that high level of abuse.

Anecdotal before, clearly identified now through the very narrow lens of violence as defined in the Criminal Code, this reality is chilling. I know that our partners, the men in this society and in this room, will enable the kinds of legislation that can fight this kind of pervasive and unacceptable behaviour.

It reduces the quality of life. We must find ways to overcome these obstacles which limit access by women to full and fear free participation in the economic, social, cultural and political life of Canadian society.

I said then that I would address this issue. I intend to be true to my word and I know my colleagues will support that. We will take a number of initiatives in the fields of public relations, elimination of pornography and removal of abusers from the home.

Abused women should have the choice as to whether they wish protection so that they can stay in their home or whether they wish to seek support and refuge in another place.

All these issues will be considered as my department, Status of Women Canada, works toward creating a non-violent society for all Canadians. I count on the support of all members to enable that to happen. This will be done in collaboration with the Minister of Justice. The Minister of Justice is going to be a very busy man, as is the Solicitor General.

I am going to work with my provincial and territorial counterparts, with all other federal departments and with our partners in the public and private sector.

Another area that deserves our attention is the situation of aboriginal peoples. We know they face discrimination. The needs of the aboriginal women have long been neglected and the lives of the younger generation will not improve without proper access to education.

The aboriginal head start program and post-secondary education assistance for these students will be the foundation of the future independence and economic well-being of the aboriginal communities.

Finally, we will work to reinforce social justice and equality, two of the core values that underlie Canadian society. In a country founded on democratic principles, there cannot be degrees of citizenship or special status for some and not for others.

At a time when we have to compete with nations around the world, there is absolutely no doubt in my mind that our collective prosperity depends on our capacity to discover and use the skills, creativity and expertise of all Canadians. Our diversity, both social and cultural, is not a stumbling block. It is a building block for our nation.

(1245)

New measures will be taken to combat racial discrimination and prejudice. The Canadian Human Rights Act will be amended and the Canadian race relations foundation act will be proclaimed. The new race relations foundation will bring Canadians together to foster a sense of shared identity and purpose. It promises to be the focal point for the promotion of social equality and mutual respect.

I am particularly pleased that the court challenges program and the law reform commission are being reinstated. The restoration of these two programs are the legal mechanisms for making our justice system work and accessible to all Canadians.

Initiatives to deal with hate crimes will also be introduced. Hatred based on race, religion, gender or sexual orientation has no place in Canada. We are all part of the same society. Each person of every background and culture brings to this nation unique experience and talent and we profit from them.

To quote the speech from the throne: "Job creation and sustained economic growth require an investment in people". That means all people. "This investment in all Canadians is what Canada is all about".

For years we have welcomed numerous immigrants to our shores in the hope that by building a new life in this great and rich country, those women and men would also contribute not only to the fabric but also to the richness of our society. We have not been disappointed. A unique Canadian identity has been forged, drawing upon this wellspring of talent and potential. Every sphere of Canadian life has benefited and been enriched.

In Canada we stand firm in our convictions that people need not abandon their culture in order to join us. We believe that all cultures enrich us as individuals and as a nation. This is the Canadian way.

I said at the beginning that the speech from the throne is a blueprint for change. It is also, if I may say, a very tall order. As one great Canadian has said: "We have work to do". However, work and challenge surely do not scare our Prime Minister who has been at the forefront of change for the last quarter century.

His passion for Canada, its unity and its future are only matched by his high standard of honesty and his powerful desire to serve Canadians and all creeds.

[*Translation*]

We must follow the lead of our Prime Minister and act with courage, determination and perseverance to ensure that the major changes we have put forward to improve the quality of life of all Canadians can be achieved in a spirit of harmony and goodwill.

[*English*]

Finally, I urge my colleagues of all parties to join with me and the government to ensure that together we can implement this substantial plan of action. Fighting against discrimination, promoting social justice and equality of opportunity is not a partisan goal for any of us in this House. It has to be and is a basic and essential principle for anyone who has been granted the confidence and the trust of the people who now sit in this House to make it a reality.

Mr. Chuck Strahl (Fraser Valley East): Mr. Speaker, I really enjoyed that speech. There were parts that I thought were particularly good. The admonitions to all of us in the House to fight inequality and discrimination are well taken and I think she will find widespread support on all sides of the House for those kinds of sentiments.

(1250)

Many of us who sit at this end of the House come from a region of Canada that was deliberately populated by an immigration program that brought a lot of immigrants into Canada at a specific time. Therefore there is a lot of support for an immigration program and a wide acceptance of a large variety and degree of different backgrounds. I applaud those sentiments and I think they are well taken.

I particularly liked the comments about no special status. There is a large degree of support in western Canada and in my riding for the idea that there is no special status, that all people are Canadians regardless of their race, colour, language or background. That concept has wide acceptance.

What I would caution the minister about is how we fight inequality and discrimination. She should use with much caution this idea of an affirmative action plan. In Ontario Premier Rae tried to move into a realm where he was going to force something on to people they felt was unacceptable and he had to back down. The reason is that people want to be treated equally, not with special status.

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That is my caution to the minister. I would ask her to comment on the idea that affirmative action sometimes does not bring about the result that I know she is trying to achieve.

Mrs. Finestone: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the hon. member for his question. The issue is one that has been troubling to me for a number of reasons.

As the mother of a son and a daughter who were given equal access to education and to a sense of equal worth, I can tell him that until very recently my son would have done well, but my daughter would not have had the same opportunities, would not have had the same pay, and would certainly not have been given the same kind of treatment.

The purpose of an affirmative action program, if that is what you are referring to, which is found in section 15 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, looks at mechanisms to remove discrimination that has been endemic within our population.

I believe the way that legislation was pursued was totally unfair and uncertainly unpopular with me. I believe that fairness, equality of access, equality of opportunity based on the merit principle, based on ability, is the focal point.

We still have ongoing discrimination. There is racism. There is homophobia to be found in our society that must be combated. That is why the programs of the multiculturalism department are so valuable. That is why they are worth any kind of investment; monetarily, intellectually or with the commitment and involvement of people in our communities.

We all know the insidious hatred that is out there and the misunderstanding in the minds of some people has a negative impact on moving toward, as you and I believe, an equal and fair and open society that is built on trust, understanding and respect for difference.

Treating people differently does not mean they are being treated outside the parameters of equality. Women's entry into and attachment to the workplace is very different from that of men because they have the procreative role that renews our society. They are in their childbearing years. They are in and out of the workplace and have that different attachment. We also have the fact that whether we like it or not women are the caretakers of elderly families, of their mothers and their fathers. They are sort of sandwiched in between. Whatever policies are adopted with respect to the job market, pay and the organization of the time within the job market must reflect women's reality as different from men. However I would never want to say that I will hire only a woman or only an ethnic minority because that is what fits the target market. I would say that given equal merit, because there has been this systemic discrimination on equal

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principle, I would certainly tend to hire that person who has suffered discrimination under section 15 of our charter.

(1255)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Philippe Paré (Louis-Hébert): Mr. Speaker, like the Secretary of State for Multiculturalism and the Status of Women, I am pleased to see a greater number of women in the House of Commons. I personally think that if, in the past, the number of women had been higher in this place, Canada would probably be a different country and would have faced the economic and human problems differently. I therefore invite all the women in this House, regardless of their affiliation, to sometimes rise above party lines and form a common front, because I believe that men need to see such a demonstration.

I am also very pleased to see a number of members representing different cultural communities. I think this also reflects the nature of our country, which is a good thing in this House.

I appreciated the remarks of the hon. member for Mount Royal and I really hope that she did not just make a speech. I am not insinuating anything, but I know that the hon. member is tackling a very big problem. She will undoubtedly need a great deal of courage and also a lot of support from both sides of the House.

I believe she should concentrate her efforts on two aspects: the economic independence of women and zero tolerance toward violence. Too often still, in fact every day and every week, the newspapers are full of intolerable stories about women. We often see that men who wield some power, for example judges and policemen, and who have to deal with unfair situations or violence to women, react like men.

I have two questions. First, regarding the economic independence of women, I find it hard to see how women will fit in the infrastructure program designed to create jobs. The Secretary of State suggested that women should make proposals, but it is not certain that they will be the ones who will build the infrastructures, and I am a bit disappointed by that.

Second, the Secretary of State also referred to the protection of minorities. Given the fact that she represents a riding from Quebec, does the hon. member intend to explain outside Quebec, in the other provinces, how the fate of the anglophone minority in Quebec is different from that of the francophone minority in the other provinces?

Mrs. Finestone: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the hon. member for his comments. There is no doubt that I count on the support, not only of the women from all sides of the House, but also of the men, because without the support and help of our male colleagues, we will never succeed in improving the status of women and in showing that their cause is a just cause.

I truly appreciate the comments made by hon. member and I hope that his colleagues will indeed give me their help and support. I also noted that there are three women in his caucus whom I know very well, since I have had the opportunity to work with them during the last parliamentary session and also in Quebec.

(1300)

I am convinced that when a women's caucus is set up in this House—which is something I will try to do soon—that caucus will help me, because its members will share my ideas on equal access for people, men and women both, whether on a economic, cultural, social or political level.

As for your questions on economic independence, I must say that when we think of public works, we only think of the so-called non-traditional work for women. But there are women who are just as capable as men. Some men are strong, but others are not so strong. Therefore, it is possible to find women who can work in these projects.

Let us not forget that on the eve of the 21st century, we have all kinds of technological support. Who uses the little computer? Who is behind the scenes? It is always women. And I have to say that you need women in order to promote infrastructure projects.

Basically, what I meant to say when I asked women to go and talk —

The Acting Speaker (Mr. LeBlanc): I would ask the hon. minister to end her sentence, but I must point out that questions and comments are now over.

[*English*]

Mrs. Finestone: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I just want to assure the members opposite and my colleagues that first the infrastructure program does include and will benefit women even if they just fix the parking lots and the lighting in our subway systems across this land.

With respect to minority rights, I assure that equality of opportunity, equality of access and the merits of bilingualism is something I will talk about across this land. I have done it in the past. I have been a guest speaker for the francophones in Saskatchewan and Alberta and I will continue to do so. I will also speak to the rights of anglophones in Quebec as integral to the whole Quebec picture.

Mr. Myron Thompson (Wild Rose): Mr. Speaker, may I take this opportunity to congratulate you on your appointment. I see there is a change in the Chair again. I have already congratulated Madam Speaker. I do wish the both of you the very best in this 35th Parliament.

As I stand here today I want everyone to know how proud I am to have this opportunity. My very special thanks goes out to the Wild Rose voters who put their faith in me last October 25. I would also like to thank those who worked so hard to get me

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elected. A special thanks to my wife Dot for her faith and love during the campaign which remains with me today.

I am proud to be a Canadian by choice. When I arrived in Alberta 26 years ago along with my wife and my one-month-old boy I knew in a very short time that Canada was the place that I wanted to call home.

When I took my oath of citizenship in 1974, that was one of the highlights of my life. I never dreamed for a second at that time that I would have the honour to sit in this Chamber as a member of Parliament. However now that I am I pray that I might always speak the voice of some 45,000 that put me here.

Today I take pleasure in doing just that by addressing the topic of justice. As I recall and think about the values and the principles upon which this great country was founded, I have to ask myself what happened. Why is it today as we hear the voice of Canadians all across the country crying out for justice that their voices seem to be going unheard? Why is it when I walk to this place each day past the Department of Justice building that I feel the key word of justice has lost its meaning in this country? Justice appears to be in the minds of thousands of Canadians as a word that applies only to the rights and the protection of the criminal while the rights and the safety of law abiding potential victims goes completely unaddressed.

(1305)

I believe that the government must immediately set its focus on the latter group. It should stop listening to the voices and the pressures of small interest groups crying out for criminals and refocus on the victims with a message that violence in this country will no longer be tolerated. People have the right to feel safe and be safe in this great country and we must aim for that goal.

The red book along with the throne speech alluded to the idea but I would suggest that it does not go nearly far enough in many areas. I admit I coughed once during the throne speech and may have missed something but I listened to about 10 or 15 seconds on justice.

I would like to offer some suggestions. Is it known that in the last five years 32 people have died in this country at the hands of 23 repeat offenders who were paroled from our penal system? This is the number that I know about. I really do not know what the true number is but that is how many I know about.

If we had a plane crash and 32 people died then this House would stand and mourn. If we had 32 people die on a bus or train collision then we would stand and mourn. When hear about 32 people dying at the hands of repeat killers we continue to do nothing. It is time to wake up and address this problem. If even one person had died from the hands of a repeat killer then as far as I am concerned that is one too many.

My suggestion based on the thousands of other comments from people would be to stop automatic parole. The frightening thing is that there will be approximately 80 more early parole hearings for first degree killers during the life of this 35th Parliament.

I quote from one of these repeat offenders: "The only thing crazier than me is the system that allowed me to kill again". This whole affair suggests to me that there is an element of incompetence that exists in our parole board, possibly through patronage appointments. Let us fix this incompetence problem and let us fix it now.

I have worked with young people for 30 years of my life, as a teacher, guidance counsellor and a junior high school principal. Since my election I have attended several meetings with parents, community members, school administrators to discuss what to do about the violence in schools.

Most of us here will remember the days of spitballs, getting out of line and chewing gum. These present day meetings are addressing drug abuse, rape, assault and murder. We have certainly come a long way. Yet when we have legislation such as the present Young Offenders Act there simply is no deterrent.

Our judicial committee has made a submission regarding not just our views but the views of thousands of Canadians who have given input through our recent task force of changes that must be made to the Young Offenders Act.

(1310)

We encourage the Minister of Justice to seriously consider these changes which would bring accountability, restitution and punishment back to the forefront in dealing with criminal youth. Most of all it would return justice in dealing with acts of crime.

We further suggest based on the voice of the people that non-citizens of Canada convicted of a serious crime be immediately deported. Never again should there ever be another Charles Ng in this country. When I hear the minister of human resources say that thousands of Canadian children live in poverty and I think of the millions of dollars we spend to protect the likes of Charles Ng, I am flabbergasted.

I could go on for hours discussing the many things the people of this country want changed. However one change that must be implemented is the opportunity for the people to voice their concerns through a national, binding referendum on capital punishment.

Enough is enough. Now is the time to do something that will truly make this country a safer place to be for our law-abiding citizens. Let us not procrastinate or pussyfoot around any longer with these problems as the last three or four Parliaments have done.

In conclusion, I seriously believe there is not one member of the 295 in this Chamber who has not heard the cry from his or her constituents to do something about the justice system. We have

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heard the people speak. It is our duty to act upon that voice and begin working immediately to return the word justice to our country.

Only this morning in Question Period we heard that a sexual perpetrator of children has been released and is roaming the streets in British Columbia. He is a non-citizen. Why are we not rounding that individual up and getting him out of this country? We do not need him in Canada, nor do we need the likes of him. We could do it today, but it is my understanding that he has been released until February 16. What could happen between now and then?

Mr. Ronald J. Duhamel (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Public Works and Government Services): Madam Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for his passionate address with respect to a very important issue.

I have three brief questions that would perhaps help the discussion. He pointed out if my memory serves me correctly that 32 people have been killed by 23 individuals who had been paroled. As he indicated, even one death is one too many. Does he know how many overall have been paroled? In other words, these 23 parolees he speaks of are what percentage of all parolees? I do not know if he has that information.

There is another point I want to raise as a question. He indicated a need to improve the system. Of course all colleagues from all parties would agree that that is so. In fact, we made a commitment to do that in our electoral platform and it was repeated again in the speech from the throne.

Is he indicating that better appointments and better rules are necessary? I thought it was a suggestion that appointments would be the main ingredient there.

Finally, I had an independent study group of qualified individuals look at rates of crime in an attempt to see whether or not they correlated with capital punishment. In other words, in countries where there is capital punishment and in those where there is not, was there a correlation between rates of crime? It varied up and down. Sometimes it was yes and sometimes it was no.

I was wondering whether or not the hon. member had any credible studies which showed that if there were to be capital punishment in this country that all of a sudden violence—quite apart from the violence that the state of course would become involved in—would decrease.

(1315)

Mr. Thompson: Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the hon. member for his questions.

Regarding determining the percentage of people released from the penal system who kill again, we have just begun that process. It is a difficult thing to get our hands on. We have

identified who they are and so far our research shows that 32 people have died at their hands. As we continue I know that number will grow.

With regard to appointments, if we are going to have a parole board the last reason for appointment to a parole board should be that they were the good old boys or good old girls with some political party, doing political favours. Yet that seems to be the impression Canadians have. It certainly is the impression I have about some of them. I am not saying they are not qualified and cannot do the job. I am saying that there ought to be a better way of selecting these individuals and making certain that those who are appointed to that board know what they are doing.

The first thing we have to do is get an understanding that there is no such thing as automatic parole. Section 745 of the Criminal Code is one that must be repealed. Twenty-five years has to mean 25 years and 15 years has to mean 15 years.

On the issue of capital punishment, I am not sure what the stats are. I am saying that people out there are crying for justice. Let us give it to them and let them decide through a national binding referendum.

Mrs. Jane Stewart (Brant): Madam Speaker, just a short comment. Congratulations to the hon. member for Wild Rose, a marvellous name for a constituency and for a very impassioned speech.

I would like to point out that as we look through the total throne speech there are only very short references to all the important aspects this government will be focusing on.

We had the pleasure of having almost every single minister stand up in this House and broaden their perspective, including the Minister of Justice yesterday. I point that out to the member. If he did not hear it yesterday I hope the hon. member will read the speech by the hon. Minister of Justice, his lengthy dissertation on all his points of focus, many of which were mentioned in the hon. member's speech today.

Mr. Thompson: Madam Speaker, very briefly I do know of several members in the present government who feel exactly the way I do. I would be pleased to work alongside them.

I also know that we cannot continue to talk, talk, talk, rhetoric, rhetoric, rhetoric. Let us get to work. Let us get the job done now.

Mrs. Jean Payne (St. John's West): Madam Speaker, it is indeed a pleasure for me to speak for the first time in this great Chamber and to congratulate you on your appointment to the Chair.

I would like to begin my remarks by thanking the people of St. John's West for their support on October 25. I am greatly honoured to serve as their member of Parliament and I look forward to working with my constituents over the next four years.

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My riding represents a mix of both the old and the new. In St. John's West the fishery is the largest industry and has been a way of life for the past 500 years. At the same time there are many small businesses in the district, some of which are at the leading edge of high technology research. Others are traditional types of businesses which have been employing people for many years.

The people of my district are honest and hard working. They count back the generations of people earning a living from the sea. Business operators recall years of good and bad times. Newfoundlanders have a reputation for sticking together and finding solutions and I have just found that my colleagues in this place also stick together.

Today the people of St. John's West face a number of problems. The decline in the fishery has had a devastating effect on most families in my district. Small business operators are trying to cope with a decrease in sales and the burdens caused by the GST and other taxes. Young people were looking to the future, only to see despair.

(1320)

During the election Liberals campaigned on a platform of hope and opportunity. The decline in the Newfoundland fishery has struck at the very heart of our province. Under the previous administration foreigners were stealing our fish and laughing at us overseas, while our fisher people at home took empty nets and came home with empty boats. Short-term political concerns were given priority over the long-term health of the industry.

The people of St. John's West were not satisfied with the way the former government dealt with these important issues and that is why fisher persons and plant workers in my riding voted for a Liberal government.

In the throne speech the government made special mention of the challenges facing the east coast fishery. At this time, I would like to say thank you to our Prime Minister who has demonstrated such foresight and wisdom in the appointment of his ministers, in particular the appointment of our very knowledgeable and capable Minister of Fisheries and Oceans. A fellow Newfoundlander and colleague, his reputation for working hard is well known and I can personally vouch for the long hours he dedicates to his work.

The Minister of Fisheries and Oceans has been hard at work dealing with foreign overfishing, with measures directed toward rebuilding fish stocks and providing income support programs for those who are displaced by the close out of the fishing industry. The road to recovery in the fishery will be a difficult one but the people of St. John's West are up to the challenge and are prepared to make the necessary sacrifices.

I look forward to playing my role as member of Parliament in working with the minister and my colleagues in helping our number one industry come back to the levels it once enjoyed.

Also in my riding we have what was once considered to be one of the most affluent areas of our province. That area is a town called Argentia. This town is now facing a bleak and uncertain future as the U.S. navy prepares to close its station in that community. The American presence has been a daily fact in Argentia for about 50 years and their pull-out will have a lasting impact on the local economy.

The people of Argentia did not lie down and give up when the American announcement came two years ago. They have been working hard to create opportunities in their own community. The "Agenda for Argentia: A Study on Re-Use", is a testament to the town's determination to prosper. Negotiations are presently under way with the Americans on issues relating to the U.S. naval station and I have met with our ministers on the issue to ensure that these concerns are addressed.

The federal government has already provided funding for the consultant's report on the future use of station facilities. I was pleased to announce recently on behalf of the minister responsible for ACOA that an entrepreneurial training program would be implemented. A key recommendation of the consultant's report was the long-term redevelopment of the port facilities at the station. Such redevelopment would provide needed jobs in an area of increasing unemployment. These efforts will help ease the transition for Argentia.

Today I want to again assure the people of Argentia that they can count on my support as they explore development opportunities.

A decision by Marine Atlantic recently to reduce its scheduled ferry service from North Sydney, Nova Scotia, to Argentia is another blow to the town. The six-week reduction will have a double impact on Argentia. The shorter season will mean that fewer truckers and tourists will come to visit the town, to eat in the local restaurants and to buy fuel. It will take money out of the local economy. As well, the shorter season will mean less work for Marine Atlantic employees and a greater reliance on unemployment insurance throughout the fall and winter.

This is a backward move by Marine Atlantic and I would call on the company to reverse its decision and I would call on this government to encourage it to revisit its plans for the area.

(1325)

Small businesses in St. John's West face many challenges. The long recession has hurt sales. Then in 1991 came that infamous tax, the goods and service tax, a tax to end all taxes. It was imposed by the previous government and has created a paper burden that many business administrators and operators find impossible to deal with. In addition, the high interest rates

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followed by the previous administration limited funding opportunities for small businesses.

Small businesses are vital to the future prosperity of the residents of St. John's West. Most jobs created in the province of Newfoundland are created by small businesses. As a business operator, I know firsthand the difficulties faced by this sector. During the election I listened to the pleas of small business owners asking for some relief from the problems they experienced.

The Liberal Party has given its promise to help small businesses. I am pleased to hear, in the speech from the throne, the government's determination to fulfil its commitments in that area. The Canada investment fund will also help high technology companies secure funding for product development, improving market access and obtaining long-term capital.

The Prime Minister's commitment to replacing the GST is greatly appreciated by the business people in St. John's West. The GST has been a disaster that has either driven businesses underground or simply forced them out of business altogether. As I have said before, it has increased the paper burden and costs to businesses and forced many to lay off staff in order to reduce their costs. This is an unacceptable situation and I am very pleased with the government's determination to correct it.

Business operators from St. John's West will have an opportunity to participate in a study on a tax to replace the GST. Businesses were not consulted the last time, but they will certainly be consulted by the government this time and by our Prime Minister.

The government's commitment to improving the literacy skills of Canadians is a great step forward. There are people in my district who are not able to take advantage of training programs because they lack the basic math and reading skills. Renewed funding for the national literacy program will enable the people of St. John's West to make better use of government training programs.

The theme of the Liberal Party during the election was creating opportunity. Before the election Canadians felt frustrated with their government. They felt out of touch and felt that their government was not listening to them.

On October 25, Canadians and the people of St. John's West spoke with a loud, clear voice. The government has received the message and it will listen to Canadians. The new Liberal government will provide the people of St. John's West with the opportunities they need to earn a decent living and prosper in this great country.

Once again I wish to thank the people of St. John's West for their overwhelming support. I look forward to the next four years to be their voice in this great Canadian House of Commons.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): Before going to the questions and comments portion, I would like to apologize for making a mistake on your riding. My list was not in order.

Mrs. Beryl Gaffney (Nepean): Madam Speaker, I would like to congratulate the member for St. John's West for her maiden speech in the House of Commons. At the same time, I would like to congratulate her and the people of St. John's West for electing her to the House of Commons. As stated previously by the secretary of state, I welcome all the new women in the House of Commons. It will be a pleasure to work with you for the next few years.

I visited the province of Newfoundland on a couple of occasions. It is one of the most incredibly beautiful provinces in this country. I know the people of Newfoundland are going through very difficult times, especially in the fisheries industry. Through my experience of going from door to door and talking with families who had a family member unemployed, I know the amount of despair being felt by each household. Yet the level of unemployment here in central Canada, as a member for central Canada, is not nearly as high as what the province of Newfoundland, and in particular the member's riding of St. John's West, is experiencing.

(1330)

I would like to ask the member for St. John's West if the people of her riding have a sense of hope. Do they see that Canada is going to be able to pull out of this recession or economic morass we appear to be in? The fisheries industry is certainly down, but are they prepared to move in other directions and re-establish themselves in other distinct fields within Newfoundland?

Mrs. Payne: Madam Speaker, I want to thank the hon. member for her comments and her questions. At this time I would like to extend an invitation to her to return to Newfoundland.

I have to say that during the election one of the common themes was the need for employment. Almost every constituent I met asked if this government would provide more employment.

They were very happy with the new infrastructure program that our Prime Minister put forward in our red book. They are certainly looking forward to having that put in place. As a matter of fact I have already met with some of the people on the municipal councils in my riding and they certainly are very willing to participate. I do not think there is one community council that is not looking forward to participating in that program. They are certainly looking forward to having greater access to jobs and job opportunities.

Mr. Jim Abbott (Kootenay East): Madam Speaker, I would like to congratulate the member on her speech, particu-

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larly on the passion she brings to it. I think her constituents obviously are going to be served well.

I am interested primarily because I have some very wonderful friends from Newfoundland living in my constituency and I am looking forward to the opportunity to travel to Newfoundland. I have had the opportunity to be in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island but have not travelled to your island. I am very much looking forward to that.

The hon. member mentioned an income support program. I think I would support the concept of an income support program depending on its definition. I would support that by contrast to what seems to have been going on in terms of the unemployment insurance program.

In recent programs on television, I have noted that there are times when one day is considered to be a week and we get into the so-called 10-42 program where people can work for 10 days and get 42 weeks of unemployment insurance.

I wonder if the member would agree that it would be better to come up with some kind of specific income support program for the people who are particularly disadvantaged by the collapse of the fishery rather than continuing to work with a band-aid approach with respect to unemployment insurance.

Mrs. Payne: Madam Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his question.

I have to say that we have quite a number of people from western Canada in our province, particularly working on the Hibernia project, which I am sure the member is familiar with.

As to the member's comments with regard to the income support program, I have to agree that when this program was put in place by the former administration it was poorly conceived and implemented. I do not think that is any secret to anybody in this House or in the previous House.

I believe the hon. member probably made a mistake when he said a 10-day program, or 10 days of work to qualify for a year of unemployment insurance. I think the hon. member might have meant 10 weeks of work which is so in some cases.

We certainly do support a better support program for the fishermen who have been displaced by this terrible tragedy in our province and I think we should work toward that goal.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Peter Milliken (Parliamentary Secretary to Government House Leader): Madam Speaker, my very first duty is to congratulate you on your appointment as Deputy Chairman of Committees of the Whole House. I am happy to see you in the Chair now and I hope that your term of office will be long and very happy.

(1335)

[*English*]

I also congratulate the mover and the seconder of the Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne, the hon. member for Bruce—Grey and the hon. member for Madawaska—Victoria. Both as new members of the House did a credit to their constituents and all their electors by the speeches they gave in moving and seconding the address. They were excellent presentations. They clearly spoke from the heart about the beautiful parts of the country they represent. I congratulate them thoroughly for what they have done.

My third obligation is to thank the electors of Kingston and the Islands who once again have done me the honour of electing me to represent them in the House. I enjoyed my first five years in Parliament immensely. I am very grateful the electors have seen fit to choose me once again to represent them. I look forward to doing so on a different side of the House this time and I hope more effectively than last. I certainly will work as hard as I did last time and will continue to work in their best interests in Parliament, and indeed for the best interests of Canadians as a whole.

I thank the Prime Minister for giving me the opportunity to serve as a parliamentary secretary, particularly to the government House leader, the dean of the House and one of its most distinguished members of this House. It is a privilege to work with him. I look forward to my continuing work as parliamentary secretary, at least for the next period of time.

For those of us who sat in the Chamber for the last five years—and I am sure I could extrapolate from that and say for those who were here for the last nine years—the election results could hardly have been a surprise. We sitting in opposition at the time watched a government that stumbled from blunder to blunder. I know the evidence of its errors and of its failures was amply borne out in the electoral result and of course was borne out by the fact that the Progressive Conservative Party, which was once one of Canada's great national parties, was destroyed electorally in the election on October 25 last year.

The seeds of its destruction were sown in the course of the Parliament that had carried on since the election in 1984. As a party it consistently ignored the wishes of the people of Canada and persistently did its utmost, it seemed, to betray the trust that had been placed in it as a government, in that it was elected on a certain platform which it failed to deliver on.

We have seen a significant change, I submit, in the political climate. The Liberal Party of Canada which won the last election came forward with a platform that was reasonable, clearly acceptable and offered a real possibility that it could be implemented. That cannot be said of all the promises of all the other parties. The argument was made and made forcefully throughout the campaign that in putting forward the red book the Liberal

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Party was offering a policy alternative to Canadians, one that was reasonable and that could be implemented. In other words, it was a believable program.

Everything the government has done so far since it took office in November has been in fulfilment of those promises and has indicated to Canadians that it is a government committed to fulfilling its promises and that it is able to do exactly that because its promises are reasonable. I know that some of them will be difficult. We know that financial circumstances are worse than predicted, but the government is committed to trying to solve the problems that it was elected to solve and will continue to do that.

What were those problems? What were the problems that we were elected to resolve? There were two. I know the Reform Party likes to harp about the deficit. We acknowledge that is a problem. I call it problem number two. However the first and foremost and most difficult problem is that of unemployment in Canada.

Unemployment has reached what I would call crisis proportions because it has removed hope from Canadians. It has removed it from principally two categories of Canadians: first, our young people and, second, older workers who have lost their jobs and have no hope of getting another one. They have lost them prior to retirement age, prior to pension time. They have real despair with a lack of income and a breakdown in the normal earning pattern that their lives would have given them had things carried on in the usual way. It was a complete change in expectation. It was a totally unexpected downturn in events in terms of their prospects.

(1340)

Most people who are working can manage some period of unemployment, but they do not expect to be out of work permanently for years just because their job has disappeared. That is what has happened all across the country as a result of the prolonged recession we have been through, a recession which I need hardly remind members was induced by the previous government. The previous government boasted about how it had induced that recession because it thought the best thing was to slow the economy down.

Here we are with these two groups of unemployed people. I turn particularly to the young people because, as many members of the House will know, Kingston is home to two of Canada's universities: Queen's University and the Royal Military College. I have spoken of this before in the previous Parliament and I am pleased to be able to do so again today.

There are thousands of graduates from these universities. RMC graduates fortunately at the moment still have employment in the Canadian Armed Forces, but the graduates from Queen's University are finding it extremely difficult to get jobs.

I am sure there are members of the House who have had applications for employment from people across the country, people with masters of arts degrees and people with doctorates who are unable to get another job and will take a low paying job in order to get work. It is happening all the time.

I told this story many times during the election campaign. On a drive back to Kingston one night about a year ago I stopped at a gas bar. The young woman who was working behind the cash recognized me when I put down my credit card. She asked if I were not the member of Parliament for Kingston and the Islands and I said yes. How did she know? She had two degrees from Queen's University, a bachelor of arts and a bachelor of education, and she was selling gas. She could not get any other job. That is a national tragedy; that is a national disaster.

It is a tragedy for her because she is unable to get work for which she is well qualified. It is a disaster for us because we have invested big money in her education and now we are unable to get it back in terms of tax revenue. She should be working at a good job that pays a good wage and paying taxes so that we can afford to keep other people in school longer and we can provide for the sick and the helpless in our society who need money. Instead she is in a very low paying job, probably at minimum wage, and not contributing to society in the way that she has been trained to do.

That is a disaster for us. It is happening all around us and all the time. In its election platform our party committed itself to changing that around and creating jobs for people and keeping people at work. That is the fundamental mission the government is committed to. It has to be committed to it. Members of our party are working to achieve that goal.

I know that the members of the Reform Party say: "You have to be able to represent your constituents; you have to have free votes". I have no concern about voting for policies that support the principles enunciated in the red book. Indeed I consider it my duty to support those policies. I suggest to hon. members in the Reform Party that they have a similar obligation. They ran on a platform. Throughout the campaign I was pressed to read and look at copies of publications that enunciated Reform's solution for all of Canada's problems: all the deficit cutting figures, all the reductions in government expenditure that was going to bring salvation to Canadians.

I disagreed with them, and I said so. I expect Reform members in the House will support very strongly the policies put forward in those documents. If they do not support them there will be people to call them to account, because that is what they were elected to do. If their constituents decide in their wisdom later that those policies were the wrong ones and tell them so, what are the Reform members going to do? Are they going to listen to their constituents or are they going to stick by their promises? I predict if the cuts in the Reform package were made and their

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constituents objected, there would be howls and cries from their constituents and they would want to change their minds.

(1345)

In my view we have an obligation as a party to support the principles and policies we were elected on. Our policies were clear. Our policies were set forth in the red book. I know it is much talked about, and some laugh at it, but the fact is that it was the only major policy document issued by any political party in the campaign that comprehensively dealt with the issues. It was the benchmark by which every other party's platform was measured. I can safely say, given the numbers in the House, that it was clearly the best. None of the others measured up anywhere near to the standard set by the red book.

We have that set of policies that will guide the government in its work. We have heard speeches from many of the ministers in the course of this six-day debate. They have all spelled out in detail other policies that were given in sketch form in the red book. Those have been made manifest in the House and indeed to the country.

Members of the opposition say they want details. I suggest the details have been provided. The budget will provide further detail.

This is a government on the move. It has established its priorities. It has made its commitments and it is living up to them. I am very pleased to be a part of it and to support it.

Mr. Lee Morrison (Swift Current—Maple Creek—Assiniboia): Madam Speaker, I begin by sincerely thanking the hon. member for so lucidly explaining to us our duties and obligations to our constituents as if we really did not understand them at all.

With respect to his thesis on the relationship between taxation and jobs I would respectfully submit that if governments could create jobs and if raising taxes and increased government revenue would create jobs, his university student with two degrees would have two jobs.

We have had 20 years of wildcat government spending, attempts by governments to manage the economy and to give jobs to people where there were no jobs to be had. It is time to discard this old and discredited philosophy and realize that we cannot continue to selectively bleed portions of the corpse of our country to bring in more and more revenue until we finally finish off everything.

Mr. Milliken: Madam Speaker, I thank the hon. member for Swift Current—Maple Creek—Assiniboia for his comment. I felt it was time to give him a lecture on his duty to his constituents because almost daily we get a similar lecture from members of his party. I thought it was time to correct the

imbalance and perhaps give a more accurate statement of those principles.

However, that aside, I also suggest to him that the matter of revenue is not the only issue involved in deficit reduction. I am sure he would agree with me when I say that if more people are working government revenues increase. When a person goes back to work who was previously either drawing unemployment insurance or welfare, the person starts paying taxes again which increases government revenue. At the same time the person stops drawing unemployment insurance or welfare which decreases government expenditure. That helps bring about a fiscal balance between revenue and expenditure on the government side.

We stated throughout the campaign that our aim as a party was to create jobs so that Canadians who were costing the government money start paying the government money. We would then achieve a greater balance. It is quite simple. It is simply a matter of ensuring that it happens. It does not all have to happen by lavish expenditure of public funds. There are other ways of achieving it. Encouragement and inducements can be given to people in business to hire people. Inducement can be given to small business, which is our principal job creator, to hire people.

(1350)

If these things happen and Canadians start spending their money and buying more consumer goods then more people will be employed. It follows as night follows the day. If more are employed then more pay taxes and fewer draw from the government treasury in other expenses.

That is how one brings about fiscal balance. We can cut and chop until the cows come home but every time one cuts and chops without doing something to get people to work then one throws more people out of work. If that keeps happening then there are fewer and fewer paying taxes so how do we get the revenue?

There is something that has never been costed in the package of the Reform Party. I challenged the candidate in Kingston to come up with this but of course Reform does not want to because it would be so damaging to their case. Can they tell us how many jobs will be lost because of the cuts they are proposing? That has never been explained. How much revenue would the government lose with the cuts they are proposing? That has never been explained.

If that revenue is taken off, the deficit stays big. The chops will not reduce the deficit. It will grow under those changes. That is the problem with the Reform agenda and the Canadian people saw through it and they voted this party into office. That is why the Reform Party is sitting on that side of the House. Their agenda frankly was unbelievable.

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[*Translation*]

Mr. René Canuel (Matapédia—Matane): Madam Speaker, since this will be my maiden speech in the House, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate all members on their election. It would have been nice to see more members opposite, because it may be the only time I have cause to congratulate them. The Bible says that on the seventh day, God rested, but I see my colleagues opposite start resting on the fifth.

If all members of this Parliament are imbued, as I am, with a desire to serve our constituents, during this session we should be able to put in place all that is necessary for genuine economic recovery. Economic recovery is essential for this country and even more so for my riding.

Voters in the riding of Matapédia—Matane expect a lot from their federal member. At the beginning of this mandate, my constituents are delighted they finally have a member who will be able to speak his mind, and speak it more often, in this House and in the riding.

I also want to take this opportunity to offer my constituents my full co-operation and thank them for their support. I will do everything in my power to give them what they are entitled to expect of a federal member, especially a sovereigntist member in Ottawa.

In fact, voters in Matapédia—Matane made a very clear choice on October 25. My opponent, whose party is on the government side today, received the full support of the party machine, but voters made a clear decision. Once again, I want to take this opportunity to thank them.

For me, to participate actively in politics is part and parcel of my longstanding commitment to my community. I believe in this wonderful region, in the energy and determination of the people who live there, and that is the main reason for my commitment.

My presence in the House today as a member of the Bloc Québécois also arises from an act of faith in the sovereignty of Quebec. To be sovereign means to be free to do things one's own way and it also means to be in charge of one's own economic and social development.

People in the riding of Matapédia—Matane have the energy and determination to take charge of their own lives. People consult each other and share the tools they need to develop the impressive potential of their region, whether we are talking about forestry, tourism, mining or other sectors of the economy. The men and women of this riding have set up consultation tables where they share their experience.

(1355)

In my riding, we have industry and business people who believe in that region and who do their share for the develop-

ment of that new social contract. It is with those people that I want to work. It is for those men and women that I came to this House.

So, my goal is twofold: the development of my riding and the sovereignty of Quebec.

Let me introduce you in a few words to the riding of Matapédia—Matane. I live in a community of about 5 000 people that have provided the Church with three bishops who are still alive.

They are His Grace the Archbishop Louis Lévesque, who was born in Amqui, His Lordship Belzile, who is now in Africa, and His Lordship Dumais, who has just been appointed to the Gaspé diocese. He is a friend and I am very proud of that. Perhaps a new Guinness record has just been established in my riding.

The main resource in my riding is forestry and, because people believed in them, we managed to keep several villages from closing in the early 1970s. Forest business owners got together to establish a management company and used known forestry methods to develop their forests. They were so successful that twenty years later, in 1993, the Canadian Forestry Association bestowed upon the 17 MRC municipalities of the Matapédia Valley the title of forest capital of Canada. I take this opportunity to congratulate its president, Mr. Daniel Lamarre, and all his team.

The commitment towards forest management as an economic development tool for ensuring the survival of the small communities of my riding is well underway. We owe it to those workers and owners who once believed that it was possible for them to continue living in their communities.

On the north shore of the Gaspé Peninsula, there is also a fishery industry. It is going through an unprecedented crisis, and it needs help. Everyone here has heard about the delicious Matane shrimp and has feasted on them.

In that part of the riding there is also aquaculture, a fast-growing industry which shows considerable promise, because of the constant crises in the fisheries.

There is also the Maurice Lamontagne Institute, in Sainte-Flavie, where they carry out interesting and much needed research on sea products. By the way, the institute is still waiting for funds to finish the breakwater in order to dock its research boat. Unfortunately, funds for this project were reallocated by the former government. It is costing the institute extra money each year to dock the boat elsewhere.

In Mont-Joli, the regional airport has been waiting almost ten years for millions of dollars. Let me say that I will keep asking for those funds.

In my riding there is a shipyard managed by a very dynamic team of women employing a highly skilled labour force. That industry is also going through a crisis. It too needs help.

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The tourist industry is big in the riding of Matapédia—Matane. We have ski resorts with a skiing season longer than anywhere else east of the Rockies, and using only natural snow. Come and see us some time, come and ski with us, hon. members.

I could not fully describe the riding of Matapédia—Matane without mentioning its wildlife. Hunters and fishermen come from all over Canada, and from abroad to practice their favourite sport. Our salmon rivers, like the Matapédia and the Matane rivers, are renowned worldwide. All these sectors must be recognized as part of our regional economy.

Matapédia—Matane used to be an agricultural riding, but unfortunately agriculture is waning. There are fewer opportunities for the young generation since farms have become small and medium-sized businesses or large corporations. Fine, you say! Perhaps. However, it is far from easy to find people willing to assume such a heavy financial burden. The way things stand now, young people simply cannot respond to the challenge.

(1400)

In the past, even though they worked hard, our ancestors knew very early that there would be someone to carry on. Nowadays, there is no one willing to carry on because the burden is much too heavy. So people auction off their farms. What a pity! Lands with high quality topsoil lay fallow and are invaded by weeds or spruce. Even well-established and hard-working farmers have enormous problems.

Both the GATT and NAFTA have given rise to many concerns! The removal of export quotas creates others, for those who unfortunately have to work endless hours over the years. While farmers in the past were a great source of pride to rural communities, they are now disappearing before our very eyes.

Instead of giving out millions of dollars worth of unemployment benefits in my riding and others within Quebec or Canada, is a responsible government not supposed to fight for and get globally a fair price, an equivalent value for our farm products? For years the Liberals and the Conservatives have had no consideration for the rights of small communities. Is this government going to keep neglecting those farmers? They start by overtaxing them, then they shut down their post offices and they deprive them of their means of communications by closing down television stations, and so on. I will ask for a new review of the case of Radio—Matane.

In my riding, there are some cattle farms. Yet, no slaughterhouse is to be found within 250 kilometers. Is this not unbelievable? So much for the village, so much for the city. Is the minister of Agriculture well acquainted with rural areas? Is he really concerned with the real problems? Villages such as Les Méchins, Saint—Charles—Garnier, Petite—Matane, Val—Brillant,

Saint—Damase, Saint—Noël, Sainte—Jeanne and Sainte—Irène are charming areas that have a right to survive and where people have the right to work. It is a matter of dignity. Yet, for more than 20 years, these small villages have had problems.

The question I am asking myself and my colleagues in this House is whether people in these small villages still have the right to live at home. As long as these rural people pay taxes to the federal government, I will fight for them. That is why they elected me. They are not getting their due. These men and women have spent their lives in forestry, fishing or farming; they spent all their energy to raise a family and now, at 55, tired, exhausted and even sick sometimes, they have no pension fund. Should they be considered as pariahs of our society? No, Madam Speaker!

I will plead for those men and women who have preserved true family values, values so important that 1994 will be the International Year of the Family. I will also fight for the young people, a human resource of great richness, for those young people who have to leave their region after high school or, in some cases, after college. Unfortunately, most of them never come back.

I ask all the members of the House to be more receptive, more understanding of the rural way of life. The same thing could happen to forestry in the near future. The former government had announced it was withdrawing from the subsidiary agreement with Quebec on forestry and from the forest development program in eastern Quebec.

(1405)

The non-renewal of these two programs will affect more than 18,000 foresters in eastern Quebec. In the lower St. Lawrence region, more than 50 per cent of private woodlot owners take part in development whereas that figure is about 12 per cent for the province as a whole.

During the campaign, the Liberal Party acknowledged the positive impact of these programs and promised it would examine its financial contribution and bring it back to previous levels. I will personally see to it that they fulfill that commitment. The Minister of Natural Resources can count on my co-operation. These programs must be re-evaluated and she must consult all stakeholders. It is those involved in the area who can best advise her.

At a time when, on a global scale, there is so much talk of sustainable development and the protection of ecosystems I can assure this House that, in my riding, forestry workers are ready and eager to meet the challenge.

More than 20 years ago, pool management came to my riding. Two thousand producers are still on the waiting list to take part in this collective effort.

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The area set up the necessary structures to carry on. We have a forestry school and a research centre in Causapsal. Our workforce is better qualified and increasingly competent.

When the previous government decided to make cuts in those two programs, it did not understand that putting money into private woodlots yields returns far in excess of the initial investment.

Investing in forestry is investing in the industry's future. Investing in private woodlots is bringing raw material closer to the processing industry. Investing in private woodlots is ensuring the survival of dynamic small businesses, but also the creation of thousands of jobs in rural communities. Investing in forestry is investing for the long term in an industry which has always brought pride to this country and the 370 Quebec communities it supports.

Can the government ignore the efforts made by the forestry producers in my riding, who have done so much to promote forest development? Now is not the time to let them down. On the contrary, now is the time to streamline those programs to increase their efficiency. We must support the full development of the forestry industry, in Quebec and Canada. To stop investing in private woodlots would mean the certain death of all small remote communities.

We must increase research into new technologies, and speed up their transfer to those who really need them to make our industry more competitive on the world markets.

We must develop new products which will bring to the regions new small businesses which create so many well-paying jobs.

Resources must be processed locally. We no longer want to be drawers of water and hewers of wood. People in my riding deserve much more than that.

We must develop new markets for these products. And last but not least, we must aim at quality. People in my riding know what quality is.

Those are the very realistic mandates that we, in this House, can give ourselves. It is what my constituents are asking.

Men and women in the riding of Matapédia—Matane want to be actively involved in meeting the challenges of the 21st century.

Experts agree that if a major effort is not made in the next five years to rescue the forestry industry in Canada, it will be too late. This means that what was once a flagship Canadian industry will drag down in its fall hundreds of thousands of jobs, and hence hundreds of small communities depending on forestry.

(1410)

I was deeply disappointed that the speech from the throne did not even mention the natural resources sector.

Let's not forget that we do not inherit the land of our fathers, we borrow the land of our children. I believe that the people of my riding, those of Quebec, British Columbia and the Maritimes need help to make our natural resources more and more productive and more and more profitable.

Mr. Plamondon: Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Since this is the last day, I thought I had the concurrence of the Liberal and Reform parties to allow for speeches of a full 20 minutes and that for the next three speakers we would forgo the questions and comments period so that all those who are on the roll for this afternoon could address the House.

Is the hon. member agreeing, as the member for Beauséjour seems to be?

Mr. Graham: Yes, I agree, Madam Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): Do I have unanimous consent to end the questions and comments period?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[English]

Mr. Beryl Gaffney (Nepean): Madam Speaker, I am very pleased to stand in the House representing the people of Nepean and starting my second term along with you.

In the last few days I have heard many members speak of how beautiful their ridings are. I am sure they are all beautiful. I am not going to claim Nepean as being the most beautiful riding in the country but I will claim that its inhabitants are the most beautiful people in the country.

Over the years I have represented the people of Nepean first as a 10-year municipal politician and before that as an 11-year employee of the city of Nepean. Now I am their federal member. I have been representing the same people for 26 or 27 years. It is a very great privilege for me to be again representing them. I want to thank them for giving me this great honour to be in the Parliament of Canada.

One of the things that we members of Parliament have to do is be very flexible. I was not on the Speaker's list to speak today but our whip said: "Could the member for Nepean please be put on the Speaker's roster". I had to suddenly scurry around, get some notes together and sound reasonably intelligent. I hope I can do that and keep members awake at the same time.

When listening to Canada's Governor General deliver the speech from the throne on January 18, I was struck that just about every area where changes would take place would not only have a positive effect on the country as a whole but they had a

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very specific interest to the people who I represent in the city of Nepean.

While I was a municipal and regional councillor a few years ago, as I mentioned, I chaired the region's health committee. I am pleased this government considers preventing illness is just as important as caring for people with illnesses.

This government is committed to the Canadian health system as we know it, one that is cost effective and sensitive to the needs of all Canadians. To show just how serious we are in this area, the Prime Minister will personally chair a national forum on health. We are cognizant of the fact that health care is under the purview of the provinces, and yet at the same time we know that the Canada Health Act clearly outlines the federal responsibility.

(1415)

I was especially pleased this government recognizes there are gender differences in the health area. We are creating a centre of excellence for women's health to ensure that women's health issues receive the attention they deserve. As well, prenatal nutrition programs for low income pregnant women will be created and expanded.

I would like to express to the 37 women in the Liberal caucus how delighted I am to have them as colleagues in the House of Commons. They represent a diversity of backgrounds, reflecting the true Canada. At the same time, I welcome the women in the other parties, the Reform Party, the Bloc Quebecois, the New Democrats and the independents. I welcome them all to the House of Commons. I look forward to getting to know them better as members of this House. I believe that regardless of party, we as women have a common goal in ensuring that our gender is properly represented in this country.

This government will address the staggering problem of poverty among aboriginal children through our specific head start program. This is something I am very excited about. It is something that has been absent forever and it is something that should cause us all to hang our heads in shame, that we have allowed this to go on as long as it has.

During the election campaign the Liberal Party in our red book—and we all love to quote the red book—stressed the importance of job creation and economic growth. The speech from the throne again stresses its importance. As I went door to door in Nepean during the election campaign, just about every household had a story to tell, and they were not happy stories. It might be a son or a daughter or a husband who had been laid off, or a university or college graduate unable to find employment. I was greatly bothered by this. The despair they felt with the economy and high unemployment deeply affected me.

It is very important to me that this government continues to view job creation as its main priority. Yet I do not know of anyone who is not concerned with this country's indebtedness. We have to get the economy moving and get people back to work and at the same time we also must address our indebtedness. For these reasons and despite extremely difficult fiscal restraints, the Liberal government has chosen to undertake a major co-operative program of infrastructure renewal in this country.

As I mentioned before, when I was on municipal council I was also on an organization called the Federation of Canadian Municipalities. I was a director representing the regional municipality of Ottawa-Carleton. This is an umbrella group representing approximately 900 Canadian municipalities. The organization for years had been petitioning the federal government to be part of a tripartite agreement in infrastructure renewal.

When I was elected to Parliament in 1988 I, along with my colleague from Ottawa Centre, formed a national Liberal task force on infrastructure. We travelled the country and met with individuals. We met with the business community and we met with the civic leaders, inviting their opinions on such a tripartite agreement.

We as co-chairs presented our report to the Liberal caucus and it was as a result of our findings along with the Federation of Canadian Municipalities' recommendations that the infrastructure program was put in place.

Why do I make this point? I am not making it to blow my own horn or to bring attention to myself. I am bringing this point forward to you who are backbenchers or to you who are in opposition—and I am still a backbencher here—I want you to know that every person in this Parliament can make a difference. Never be afraid to stand on your feet and say what you really believe you can do in this House, because you can make a difference. You have got to keep pressing it.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

Mrs. Gaffney: The federal contribution to the infrastructure program will be very tangible and very significant. We are providing the provinces and municipalities with a total of \$2 billion over the next two years. For the most part the federal contribution will be matched equally by the provinces and municipalities. This will provide for a total joint program of \$6 billion and that is a very significant sum of money.

(1420)

Another issue that had a major impact on me during the campaign concerned women at home. These were mothers who stayed at home. Over and over again it was repeated to me at the door by mothers who choose to stay home with their children

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that they were not being given equal status to their counterparts who are mothers who went out to work.

There were two or three particular areas. One was with regard to child care. The mum who was at work was able to claim this on her income tax. The mother who stayed at home was not able to claim the child care on her income tax. The woman who went to work was able to pay into the CPP. The woman who was home was not able to and thus was not able to collect a pension. There are inequalities in the system that we must recognize. We must work to negate those inequalities.

I heard from small businesses about how they are overburdened with taxes. The amount of paper work just consumes far too much time, effort and money.

We heard about the banks and how they were just putting the arm lock on businesses and not allowing them to expand as they should. We know that they create 80 per cent of the jobs in this country. We know there are approximately 800,000. Would it not be wonderful if all of them could each hire one person? We must work with our investment institutions to solve the problems of inadequate capital in small and medium sized business.

The other evening I was at a dinner and the guest speaker was the human resources director for a local high tech company. He said the universities today are not graduating engineers suitable to his high tech company or they are not graduating enough engineers. They were going to the U.K. to hire engineers for a Canadian high tech company.

I find that absolutely disgraceful. I hope that our government will work with our schools, colleges and universities to ensure that we are putting out engineers or whatever profession is needed in the market today. The market is changing from day to day so our universities must make sure that our young people's education is headed in the right direction.

It has been a real pleasure to speak here on such short notice in this House of Commons this afternoon. I thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity this afternoon to address this House and take part in the debate in reply to the throne speech. I want to start by congratulating the Speaker and all those who sit in the Chair in this great chamber.

I would also like to congratulate in a very special way the Prime Minister and our government on the contents of the throne speech. It was clear from day one that the government intended to follow through on the commitments made to Canadians during the election campaign in its famous red book.

A day rarely goes by without someone in my riding contacting me to request a copy of this celebrated document, this famous red book. It has become, if you will pardon the expression, a

bible of sorts on how to restore the confidence of Canadians in government.

I admit that when we made this document public during the election campaign, I was a little worried, as were many candidates, about the risk we were taking by laying out our agenda for all to see.

But the wisdom of the leader of the Liberal Party, today the Prime Minister, in deciding to approach the Canadian electorate in such a way has been confirmed. Canadians took a close look at our platform.

(1425)

And they said: yes, generally we like what we see. I know that not everyone agreed with every aspect of our program, but they told us, yes, here is an election program. Finally, someone has the courage to tell us what they intend to do, and we are prepared to trust people who are open and have nothing to hide. Therefore, I want to congratulate the Prime Minister once again for taking this stand.

[*English*]

I also want to thank the electors of the riding of Glengarry—Prescott—Russell for their support during the last election. They have chosen to return me to this place, which is very special for me and for all those who are here and indeed for our electors.

A former Prime Minister, John Diefenbaker, once said there was no greater honour for a Canadian than to have this privilege of representing his or her fellow constituents in the highest court in the land, the Parliament of Canada.

I agree with that. I espouse that theory and I will attempt again to live up to those expectations of my constituents who have chosen to send me to this highest court in the land.

[*Translation*]

The makeup of the riding of Glengarry—Prescott—Russell is somewhat unique. My riding is home to some 100,000 people, 65 per cent of whom are Franco-Ontarians. Francophones thus make up the majority linguistic group in my riding. They are not assimilated. Nor have they lost their language and culture. In fact, 92 per cent of my constituents were born in Ontario. They have preserved their language and culture, despite what some of the members opposite might claim from time to time.

[*English*]

Of the other constituents of Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, approximately 35 per cent are English and about 5 per cent are of other languages and cultures.

In Glengarry—Prescott—Russell there is the township of Cumberland. I had the opportunity of serving the people of that area since 1976 since I was first elected at the municipal level. I was re-elected to represent them in 1978 and in 1980. In 1981 I had the honour and privilege of sitting in the Ontario legislature and in 1984 I was elected to this House of Commons. I was

re-elected in 1988 and again in 1993 to represent the people of my area.

I owe a special thanks to the people of Cumberland township who allowed me to begin this career of public service.

[*Translation*]

I also have the honour of representing the counties of Prescott and Russell and for those of you who are somewhat familiar with the region, Prescott County was part of New France prior to the Constitution Act of 1791. The Township of Longueuil used to be the Longueuil seigneurie before the Constitution Act. As those members on the other side who are historians know, there was also a seigneurie in Kingston, the Frontenac seigneurie.

[*English*]

I also have the honour of representing the people of Glengarry. Glengarry is a very special place in the history of Canada. It was there in 1784 that Sir John Johnson came from the United States with the United Empire Loyalists, or as they were known in those days the empire loyalist refugees.

That is what they were. They were people who took refuge and who came back to be under British dominion and who left the Mohawk Valley, came north across the St. Lawrence River and established the community of Williamstown. Williamstown in Glengarry was named after Sir William Johnson, the father of the founder of the community Sir John Johnson to whom I have already referred.

They established that community where the Northwest Company was subsequently established. The people of Williamstown then went on to explore other parts of Canada. They were people like Simon Fraser, Thompson, Johnson, and Alexander Mackenzie. They all lived in Williamstown in Glengarry. I am very proud to have the honour and privilege of representing such an historical place as Glengarry. I offer a special tribute to the people of Glengarry county.

(1430)

There is a building in Glengarry where Sir John Johnson made a request of Governor Haldimand at Quebec for a special designation for his part of the colony which was then Quebec. He wanted a special region to be founded where the people would be able to have English laws under which they would live. This is because after the Quebec Act the Quebec civil code existed and land tenure was of the seigniorial kind and so on. He wanted his residents to have English customs, laws and land tenure.

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I would make the argument that he wanted to establish a distinct society for the anglophones who had just moved into that part of what was then the colony of Quebec. He got it. It was called the Constitution Act of 1791 that established what then became the province of Upper Canada and it occurred right there in the village of Williamstown in the great county of Glengarry that I have the opportunity to represent.

The people from Scotland then came as a result of the highland clearances when the English barons decided to clear the highlands of Scotland to make room for sheep. Many people again became refugees. They crossed the ocean and came to Glengarry county to join with the United Empire Loyalists to form that great community that still exists.

Still today there are some few people in Glengarry who speak Gaelic. In many cases, of those who do not speak it, one would swear from their accent that they still do.

[*Translation*]

I have the very special honour and privilege of representing that area. I also have the honour of representing the native community of Akwesasne, a community which has been in turmoil, and still is, because of cigarette smuggling.

Some may say that it is nobody's fault but their own if Akwesasne natives are facing that problem, but that is not true. They too are victims. Consider the young resident of Akwesasne who was coaxed by the criminal element into carrying shipments of cigarettes across the Saint Lawrence River to earn \$100, \$200 or \$300 a day and then buy a car or whatever else young people dream about, especially those who are out of work. He and others like him are victims of this smuggling business. Let us never forget that.

The smuggling problem is an extremely serious one. Yesterday, a minister in the Ontario Cabinet said that it was the kind of problem that existed only in Quebec. With all due respect, that is not true. Nearly 40 per cent of cigarettes in Ontario, not Quebec, are sold illegally. One out of every four illegal cigarettes in Canada travels through my riding, across the Akwesasne River.

[*English*]

Finally, every single day 1,000 cases of cigarettes enter Canada in my riding alone at \$1,000 profit per case. That is a million dollars a day that the criminal element makes. Tomorrow morning when we all wake up we can think of it in the following way. Last night the criminals made another million dollars in eastern Ontario by profiteering at the expense of all of us and at the expense of those whom we represent.

(1435)

Ms. Val Meredith (Surrey—White Rock—South Langley): Madam Speaker, in response to the throne speech I would like to congratulate the government on its commitment to introduce

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measures to enhance community safety and crime prevention. During the election campaign my constituents considered that criminal justice reform was one of the major issues. My constituents made it quite clear that they expect this Parliament to bring greater protection to society.

I believe it is safe to say that all Canadians will not settle for anything less. Now that the government has raised the people's expectations that there will be change, this government must take action to meet their promises. Canadians must see that this government is serious about enhancing community safety. They will not be satisfied merely with new initiatives. Canadians want results.

While we welcome the government's commitment to introduce measures to combat the high level of violence against women and children, we hope the government is dedicated to a strategy based on reducing all forms of violence no matter the gender or age of the victim.

My constituency contains large numbers of retired individuals and teenagers. Members of these groups have expressed their concerns about becoming victims. They feel particularly prone to random and senseless acts of violence. While I encourage the government to proceed with its measures to combat violence against women and children, it must not lose sight of the fact that all violent crimes must be condemned and prosecuted with equal vigour.

In my maiden address to the House on Tuesday I mentioned an unfortunate growth in criminal activity was accompanying the rapid growth in my constituency. However the increase in crime seems to be far exceeding the growth in population. An example of this increase can be shown in the homicide statistics for the city of Surrey. Over the last two years there was a total of 27 homicides in Surrey. Over the previous five years there were only 24.

I will not dwell on the numbers other than to say that they are cause for concern. But numbers do not even begin to tell the story of violent crime. One of the most disturbing aspects of some of these homicides were that they were teenagers killing other teenagers.

I can tell this House it is not easy to listen to the parents of young victims of murder. Yet in my brief career as a member of Parliament I have had the occasion to meet with two parents who lost their children to violent crimes. I have to acknowledge the courage they had to come to me and talk to me about what it is that needs to be changed so that other Canadians do not have to have their children in the same situation.

Teenagers have been killed for their hats, their jackets and their running shoes. Others have been killed because their killers did not like the way they looked at them.

One father I met lost his son in one of these senseless killings in 1992. He, however, is fighting back. He and a group of his

colleagues have formed the organization CRY, Crime, Responsibility, Youth. This organization has been among the most vocal groups calling for amendments to the Young Offenders Act. Despite the non-partisan philosophy of the organization CRY the recommendations of the group are quite similar to my party's position on reforming the Young Offenders Act. Changes must be made. The law has to be tightened up and violent teenage offenders have to realize they cannot hide behind the act.

The problem with the Young Offenders Act is inherent in the act itself. Most Canadians can accept the premise that a 14 year old who has shoplifted a piece of candy should not go to jail nor have a criminal record. However these same Canadians do believe there should not be such leniency for a 14 year old who shoots the store clerk while robbing the cornerstore.

Another incident that illustrates the ineffectiveness of the Young Offenders Act occurred in my riding late last year. On Halloween evening two off-duty Mounties were attacked and beaten by a gang of teenagers. In December a teenager visiting our area was stabbed at a local convenience store. One of those apprehended in the stabbing was awaiting trial for the Halloween attack on the Mounties. When this information became public I was inundated with calls from my constituents expressing their outrage at a judicial system that would allow this to happen.

(1440)

I promised them that I would strive to bring changes to the law to prevent this from occurring again. I intend to keep this promise. The Young Offenders Act needs significant changes. Even the young offenders admit that the act is a joke.

The government says it will introduce measures to combat the high level of violence against women and children. However right now teenagers charged with violent attacks on women and children are being able to hide behind the Young Offenders Act. Young offenders convicted of violent attacks on women and children have received insignificant sentences because of the act. If the government is to live up to its commitment of protecting women and children, it is going to have to change the act.

I acknowledge the comments of the Minister of Justice yesterday that changes will be made. I and my colleagues look forward to working with him in making sure that those changes will indeed address the real problems.

The Young Offenders Act has certainly become a lightning rod for people's anger with the failure of the criminal justice system. However it is by no means the only piece of legislation that needs to be amended. Changes are necessary to the Criminal Code to allow for recognition of victim's rights. It is time for the victim of criminal activity to receive priority from our justice system.

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Another area that must be addressed is the entire issue of parole. Supposedly severe sentences have frequently amounted to little more than slaps on the wrist because of the parole system. This has become particularly evident with the recent stories of individuals convicted of first degree murder and sentenced to life, 25 years without parole. We now find that no parole for 25 years can somehow mean parole after 15.

When capital punishment was removed from the Criminal Code, Canadian police officers were assured that they would be protected. They were told there was a general deterrent effect in an automatic life sentence with no parole for 25 years for the murder of a police officer. Our police officers are now finding that those individuals who killed their fellow officers may now get out after 15 years.

As my constituency is the home to the largest RCMP detachment in the country, I would like to be able to assure these men and women that Parliament will pass whatever legislation is necessary to protect them.

Almost one year ago the Standing Committee on Justice and the Solicitor General of the 34th Parliament presented its 12th report entitled "Crime Prevention in Canada: Toward a National Strategy". The committee listed a series of recommendations dealing mainly with the development of a national crime prevention policy. The step is a positive one and perhaps long overdue.

However this is a long range plan. These crime prevention strategies may have an impact, but when? Will it be this year, next year, five years down the road, or maybe even ten years? Canadians do not want to wait. They do not want to hear about initiatives. They want results. I do not think that the crime prevention policies are going to provide the results in the short term.

In the long term we have to identify the root causes of criminal behaviour. We also have to develop effective means and measures of treating criminal behaviour. We have to continue to experiment and to try to address these issues.

Canadians are not prepared to accept the status quo until solutions are found. They want to feel safe in their communities today. They want the government to take immediate steps to accomplish this. The best way to accomplish this is by keeping violent criminals off the streets of Canada. While this may not be the most conducive means of rehabilitating criminals, we have to recognize that protecting the lives of Canadian citizens is paramount to the rehabilitation of violent criminal offenders.

My caucus colleagues and I are quite prepared to assist the government in developing policy that will provide Canadian society with protection from violent criminal activity. Cana-

dians are expecting this protection. This government has promised it and now we have to provide it.

One area where government may not expect as much co-operation from us is its plan to restore the court challenges program.

(1445)

Our party has a fundamental problem with a government that gives out scarce taxpayers' dollars to special interest groups so that they can turn around and sue the government. This program, which appears to be an infrastructure program for the legal profession, does not make sense in today's economic reality.

The government's position on justice reform has potential as long as the government attaches the right priorities. If it fails to acknowledge the priorities, the Reform Party will continue to lead the fight for society's right to be protected.

Mrs. Jan Brown (Calgary Southeast): Madam Speaker, when I rose to first speak in the House earlier this week I acknowledged your appointment to the Chair and extended good wishes to all of my colleagues here. Given the very serious nature of that peacekeeping debate, my focus was on a world far away. I commented from my heart on a rupturing world order. My thoughts today however spring from the heart of my political experience, and that is my riding of Calgary Southeast.

Calgary Southeast is a large urban riding made up of 20 small communities complemented by a setting of parks and rivers under a brilliant blue prairie sky, which I really miss today. Calgary Southeast is unique because it is a riding of difference. Its different business needs cover everything from large manufacturing and transportation operations to small mom and pop cornerstores. Its economic profile is different because it is home to some of the wealthier residents of Calgary as well as some of its most impoverished. However, the concerns of my constituents are neither defined nor confined by these differences, because they freely cross the income brackets.

The throne speech only briefly commented upon a plan for social reform to be completed within two years. This has great relevance for those differences I mentioned earlier within the riding. One could say it is a halting step for change when leaps and bounds are needed.

It would seem by the time the government gets around to implementing any changes the 1990s will be more than half over. Leadership is required but not to take us back to the standards of the 1980s, because our current economic situation just will not allow that. Our social security net can no longer continue to be championed by proponents of the status quo. Quite frankly, it fails the legitimate needs of Canadians as we move into the 21st century.

The challenge I bring here today is to re-think universality and what it means. I use the word challenge because I do not

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have to impress on anyone the fragility of our social programs as we face a staggering federal deficit and debt.

There is a continuing and increasing sense of panic in our business communities and among the constituents I represent. It is rather like the panic you would feel if you suddenly found yourself unable to pay for this wonderful dinner you had just eaten at a city restaurant, after having been encouraged and invited to take whatever you wanted from the menu. Just imagine that the dinner is over, the last coffees have been poured and the waiter brings the bill. You have no cash. So you give the waiter your credit card, but he comes back saying that it is over your credit limit. You try to write a cheque but the waiter will not accept it.

So how do we explain this crisis in terms of a country? More important, how do we explain this crisis in terms of people?

I was elected on a platform that offers hope to all the people of Canada. But I can tell you one thing: No one is prepared for rhetoric any longer, nor for promises that cannot be kept. To realize that I only have to go back to my election campaign. I met so many voters on the doorsteps who were fed up, disappointed, either out of work or worried about job loss, or who were just plain mad.

(1450)

I know from these neighbourhood experiences that politics and politicians had better move toward major social change and do it fast. There has been much talk, profuse public professions of social concern for those who are less able to care for themselves: the sick, the old, the unemployed and the poor.

This leads me to believe that the legitimate role of government is to do for people whatever they need to have done, but cannot do at all or do as well for themselves individually or through non-government organizations.

With our mounting debt, the provision of government funds for various groups and organizations is no longer an option. As this reality becomes accepted, organizations are lowering their dependency on the public purse and indeed are taking pride in being able to sustain themselves as associations providing valuable community service without the need for taxpayers' dollars.

I can give an example. One couple in my riding has dedicated themselves to just such an idea. About a year ago, they co-founded a centre for recovering drug and alcohol abusers. This centre differs from other programs in that it provides a haven for these people for a three month period while they find themselves moving back into the mainstream of society. The need for a centre of this type is very great and there is now a large waiting list in Calgary for the services that this centre offers.

There is no immediate possibility for expansion as operations are dependent solely on the fund-raising abilities of this group and after they have taken care of their operations there really is not very much money left over at all. However, my constituents are proud that they are making a positive difference and that they are doing it independently of government funding.

I also believe that Canadians have a personal and collective responsibility to care and provide for the basic needs of people who are unable to care and provide for themselves. We can no longer afford, either morally or financially, to provide all things to all people.

This notion of universality has bred entitlement over assistance for those who really need help to care for themselves. As an idea, universality has a major economic impact because it continues to feed the national debt, now a half trillion dollars. It is time for a new definition that does not include social programs being run by bureaucrats.

Canadian society is founded on the principles of fundamental justice. Therefore a new approach is to consider rational and compassionate care for the poor, the sick, the aged and the young, ensuring that 100 per cent of those who need help will receive it 100 per cent of the time.

I remember door-knocking during the election campaign and being asked over and over again about the Reform's plan to include old age security reductions as it moved to balance the budget. It was a hard thing for people to understand, but I explained that our plan called for a reduction and gradual elimination of those old age security payments to homes whose family income exceeded the national average income of \$54,000.

Many people in my riding could never have imagined having money like that. If they did they said they would gladly forgo some it to assist those less able to care for themselves. However, entitlement has blurred the lines of real need and we find ourselves with an idea that is out of date and financially unworkable.

I believe in the common sense of my constituents. Nowhere is this better exemplified than by a group of seniors living in a Calgary Southeast provincially subsidized housing complex. They came to know me pretty well during the campaign because I would often stop by there and have coffee with them. They represent one of those groups who I see will need continued help and support through targeted social spending.

The last time I had coffee with them was just before the election. I was asked: "Will you come back and have coffee with us, Jan, after you're elected?" They had pretty positive sense there. "We want you to speak for us, to remember us, and to stop by once in a while so that we can see that you have not changed and that you are still the same". They expect no less than what I

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consistently offered, the truth and a commitment to try which is what I offer here again today.

(1455)

My experience with the people in my riding tells me that compassion must play a large role in the delivery mechanisms that support social services to Canadians in need.

In closing, I would like to say that our compassion, coupled with rational decision-making, will make the difference. It is simply a matter of acting on our vision. When you dream great dreams as big as this country the good happens and this is what captures the heart.

Mr. Peter Thalheimer (Timmins—Chapleau): Madam Speaker, as a preliminary matter, I would like to add my congratulations to the Speaker and the deputies. On a personal matter, I would like to thank my wife and family for their support and hard work during the recent election campaign. It was their efforts basically that brought me into this Chamber.

I would also like to thank all my hard workers and the people of Timmins—Chapleau for giving me their overwhelming support in the election. I can assure them that now as a member of the highest court in this land, I will do my utmost to serve them and this government.

I would like to tell you something about myself, Madam Speaker, and something about my riding. First of all, I am a young man born of immigrant parents. I was born and raised in the western community of Unity, Saskatchewan. My parents had emigrated from Germany and they farmed there. My friends from the west will recognize and remember where Unity, Saskatchewan is.

I received my primary and secondary education there and in the latter part of the 1950s I came east. I attended the University of Ottawa law school and graduated in 1962. At the conclusion of that I established my practice in Timmins, Ontario, where I have been to this date.

It was during the course of my university days here at the University of Ottawa that I had the good fortune of meeting my wife who was teaching school in Hull, Quebec. She is from Notre-Dame-du-Laus, Quebec. I am sure my friends to the left will know where Notre-Dame-du-Laus, Quebec is. At the time that I met her she could not speak a word of English and of course I could not speak a word of French.

We have now been married for some 33 years and I have learned some French, by no means perfect, but my wife has perfected the English language. Fortunately our children, all four of them, are perfectly bilingual. As a matter of fact our youngest daughter, who graduated from the School of Journalism at Carleton University in 1990, is now doing her masters at the University of Montreal.

That is basically who I am and where I came from. Of course I practised law in the city of Timmins since 1962.

Timmins—Chapleau is a very diverse ethnic riding, but basically has about a 45 per cent francophone population. The rest of the population are of various nationalities: Finnish, Italian, English and so on.

The base economies of the riding are mining and forestry. Without these economies there would be no reason for any human habitation in Timmins—Chapleau. As we all know, mining and forestry is a large part of the total Canadian economy, but since 1987, particularly in the mining sector, it has been all but gutted because of the policies, or lack of policies, of the previous government.

(1500)

The mining industry is in a very serious decline. The ore reserves are almost at their depletion point. The mining industry advises us that unless we do something to revive and revitalize the industry, in a matter of four to eight years we will have another situation such as we have in the east coast fishery.

I attribute a lot of this to the previous government for cutting the flow-through shares initiated by the Liberal government in 1983. That program made available a large amount of capital for exploration. That capital has dried up since 1990. Now we are told by the industry that the total amount being expended in exploration is somewhere in the neighbourhood of \$300 million, whereas to keep up mining reserves in the country we need a minimum of \$800 million a year expended on exploration.

I noted in the throne speech specifically there was no mention made of mining. On October 15, during the course of the election campaign, the Liberal government released its very progressive and comprehensive mining policy. I know that everyone is happy with it and that it must be implemented. It is our task now at hand to implement the policies that were stated by the Liberals in October 1993.

It is my contention that a good place for the government to begin is by reintroducing flow-through shares. Aside from some abuses that took place under the program we know that it produced the capital required for exploration in the country. Since that program was gutted in 1990 all our capital has been going out of the country to Chile and other parts of the world where exploration has increased. This has been to our detriment and has resulted in the depletion of our ore reserves.

If the program were reintroduced by the government it would re-establish and regain the capital so urgently required for exploration. Although there have been critics of the program who said it was a run on the treasury, there are studies suggesting that the program was revenue neutral.

Let me give an example of what flow-through shares produced for the country. In 1988 in Val d'or, Quebec, there was a discovery made in the township of Louvicourt as a result of flow-through financing. That was a world class metal ore discovery. In the last two and a half years the company has spent

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some \$350 million to prepare the infrastructure to mine the property. I am advised that by July of this year the mine will be in full production. There have been many other discoveries, but that world class discovery alone will more than pay tenfold for anything that the flow-through shares may have cost the treasury over the time the program was in existence up to 1990.

(1505)

It is my hope that, if not in the next budget, some future budget will include the reintroduction of that program with modifications so that abuses can be eliminated.

We have a lot of work to do in the mining sector. The people in mining have been working very hard. They have told us what the problems are. It is now up to the government to address those problems and to implement the policies in our mining statement on October 15, 1993.

I want mention something about the forestry sector because it is another part of the basic economy of Timmins—Chapleau. It contributes largely to the Canadian economy. I am advised that in the last three or four years the pulp and paper industry people have suffered great losses, some \$2 billion to \$4 billion. They certainly have my support, and I am sure many people will support them, in their efforts to delay the implementation of effluent discharge reductions that were to take effect in 1995 by two years.

I know my time is up and that I will have many more occasions to speak. I will address those matters later.

[Translation]

Mrs. Marlene Catterall (Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Treasury Board): Madam Speaker, this is the first opportunity I have had in this House to congratulate you and your fellow speakers on your great success and to wish you good luck in the difficult task awaiting you.

[English]

Let me take this opportunity, in my first time speaking in this 35th Parliament, to say thank you to those who have helped me be here today to speak on behalf of the people of Ottawa West and, just as important, to speak on their behalf in terms of what is good for our country.

I want to say a particular thanks to my family who has for many years put up with a mother in politics. It certainly affects one's family life. It certainly makes it difficult, but it has helped me learn over the years as well how self-sufficient children can be when they are left in a bit of benign neglect.

Above all I thank the voters of Ottawa West who have again placed their confidence in me to come here to play an important role on their behalf in the future of our country. It is a good time as well to pay tribute to a former colleague in the House, the

Hon. Lloyd Francis, who for 30 years won the seat of Ottawa West every second election and eventually served as its Speaker before his retirement.

As we begin a new Parliament I think back to five years ago when I walked in here for the first time and the first time I stood in the House to speak. In fact the first time I walked into these buildings, because these buildings are an important symbol for the nation, I had a tremendous sense of being part of a long history, of owing to many generations of Canadians who have sat in these seats before us the wonderful country that we enjoy and of owing another debt as well, that is a debt to the generations yet to come. When other parliamentarians sit in these seats decades and generations from now hopefully they too will have reasons to be proud of the country we in the 35th Parliament have helped to leave for them.

(1510)

It is traditional in one's first speech in the House to speak of one's constituency and to relate it to the country. I suppose what is most important to me in this Parliament is that I represent a constituency in the national capital region. That is a fact about my community I have been proud of as long as I have lived here, and that is my entire life. We have a very special sense of responsibility in this region to the nation.

I have perhaps not felt it as poignantly as I have until last week when I sat in Parliament opposite an Official Opposition with a declared, avowed and loudly expressed purpose of changing dramatically the nature of this country, of removing from the country I have known and loved for 50 years a province that is essential to what this great country is all about.

I feel a special responsibility in Parliament to say that I am here to represent my constituents of Ottawa West. I am here as a member from the national capital region. I am here to speak for my country. That means I am also here to speak for its people.

It is important that we talk about dollars because they are the way we achieve the things we wish to achieve, but as we talk about dollars we must not forget that a country is really about people. I think of my own constituents and the messages I heard from them during the election campaign.

I represent a very mixed constituency. I represent many very poor people. I represent many quite wealthy people. I represent many unemployed people. I represent many women trying to raise children on welfare. I represent many public service employees, although not as many as most people in the Chamber think. They are only one out of five jobs in this region whereas two out of three of them are scattered across the country. Members will find them in each of their own ridings working hard to serve their constituents as well. Nonetheless they are an important component of my constituency.

I represent a riding where a third of the adults are over the age of 65. The concerns of seniors in Canada are certainly a major concern of mine. I represent many small businesses, individual or family owned businesses, and a number of companies that are right in the vanguard of where our economy is heading in the high technology field. I represent the hopes and aspirations of all those people.

I sensed in this election as never before a distrust in our Parliament, a distrust in our institutions, a distrust in one another and a deep agony about our future. I look at this Parliament as a time for not only recovery of our economy but renewal of our nation. I look at it as a time of restoring our faith in one another and our faith in the future we have together.

I believe we do that by renewing our commitment to one another, by renewing our commitment to those young people out there who are fresh, eager and well educated but with no jobs to go to. I do not want to look back in the year 2000 and say that people who were young and unemployed in 1994 are still unemployed. The problem is that they are not young any more.

I want to give those mothers raising their children on welfare a chance. Too often I have been involved in trying to get them training programs, knowing how eager and how anxious they are to make a better future for themselves and their children and knowing that they are trapped in social programs whose design is no longer capable of helping them to become self-sufficient.

I want to make a difference in terms of how we spend our money and how we run our economy so that it leaves our children and our grandchildren with air they can breathe, water they can drink, and earth they can grow their food in.

(1515)

Finally I want to make a contribution in Parliament to one of the major commitments of this government; a more open, participative type of decision-making. I suppose it comes from long years in municipal government but I believe the more we listen to the wisdom of the people, the better decisions we make.

I hear this talk about free votes, about referendums and recall of members of Parliament. The people of Ottawa West sent me here to represent them and their points of view. They also sent me here to help continue the dream of a nation called Canada. They sent me here as well to listen; to listen to the voices of the north, the west, the east, rural communities, urban communities, mining communities, fishing communities and to blend their voices with the voices of Canada. As we do in our caucus every Wednesday morning, we listen to each other and at the end of the day come out with plans and programs we believe are good for

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this country, not just good for me, my neighbour, my friends or even my constituency, only good for this country.

That is why they sent me here. That is why I am here. I am excited by the new voices I hear in this Parliament. I am excited by the new voices I hear in my caucus. I am excited by the opportunity of being on the government side of the House, to truly make a contribution in a more participative, a healthier and a more productive society, a society in which again we are committed to one another and not only to our own self-interest.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Yves Rocheleau (Trois-Rivières): Madam Speaker, since this is my maiden speech, I would like to congratulate the Speaker on his election and all members of his team on their recent appointment to their distinguished positions.

I would also like to thank the people of my riding of Trois-Rivières for having elected me as their representative in this House last October 25. The riding, with a population of about 62,000, includes seven municipalities, namely Trois-Rivières, Trois-Rivières-Ouest, Pointe-du-Lac, Yamachiche, Saint-Sévère, Saint-Barnabé and part of Saint-Thomas de Caxton. Located halfway between Montreal and Quebec City on the north shore of the majestic St. Lawrence River, my riding is highly urbanized but its western part includes very beautiful farmland.

Founded in 1634, some 360 years ago, under French rule, the city of Trois-Rivières is not only the major centre in the riding but also the regional capital of the Mauricie-Bois-Franc region stretching from the city of La Tuque, to the north, to Victoriaville and Drummondville, to the south.

Trois-Rivières is the site of a university with growing influence, two colleges, one diocesan centre, three hospitals serving the surrounding area, three television stations, four radio stations, a deep-water port, as well as a regional airport. It was long considered the pulp and paper capital of the world. However, with the decline of that industry, Trois-Rivières has been suffering and its unemployment rate now hovers between 13 and 14 per cent.

Trois-Rivières also boasts two historic educational institutions, currently serving as high schools, namely the Ursulines' College founded in 1700, whose well-preserved main building has become a major tourist attraction, and Saint-Joseph Seminary of Trois-Rivières where I completed my classical studies just like the former Quebec Premier and MLA for Trois-Rivières, Maurice L. Duplessis, and the current member of Parliament for Saint-Maurice and Prime Minister of Canada.

The Address

(1520)

I would also like to take this opportunity to once again express to the Prime Minister my sincere congratulations on his election in the riding of Saint-Maurice adjoining that of Trois-Rivières and assure him of my co-operation on any regional issue that we may have to resolve together in the best interest of our respective constituents.

As the Official Opposition critic for Industry, I would now like to address a very important issue for Quebec and Canada, namely industrial development. The Minister of Industry is in the House.

Job creation must be based on a consistent industrial policy that will allow the Quebec and Canadian economy to stay competitive. The government's throne speech contains vague statements about helping small and medium-sized businesses by working with financial institutions to improve access to capital for these businesses. What they need is concrete immediate action and not policy statements. Small and medium-sized businesses have been hard hit by the recession and the single-minded inflation-fighting policy pursued by the Bank of Canada. It is a well-known fact that, during an economic slowdown, banks tend to turn their backs on small and medium-sized businesses.

In Quebec, small and medium-sized businesses generate 46 per cent of all private sector revenue, 1,200,000 jobs or 46 per cent of private sector employment, and 52 to 54 per cent of private sector salaries.

Quebec has always been especially sensitive to the needs of small business. Many small businesses that started off in their founder's garage have now become global enterprises, like Bombardier, Cascades and others.

The problem is that Canada does not have a consistent industrial policy. It is in fact impossible for Canada to adopt such a policy because economic conditions vary from one region to another. This situation locks the government into a piecemeal strategy suitable only for damage control and partial solutions. However, it insists on retaining economic powers that the provinces need in order to develop their own industrial policy.

We saw it clearly when the Quebec government tried to put in place its industrial cluster strategy. To carry out this strategy, the Government of Quebec did not have the powers it needed, like occupational training and unemployment insurance, to name only these.

We must admit the obvious: Canadian federalism does not work. Quebec can only achieve its full economic potential if it is sovereign. Only then will it have all the economic powers to implement a real industrial policy.

I think that I can already hear our federalist friends telling us that Quebec sovereignty would mean isolation and turning inward. Nonsense, Madam Speaker. Quebec is a trading nation: about 40 per cent of its gross domestic product is exported to Canada and other countries. Why would it turn in on itself? Indeed, Quebec could even improve its access to its Canadian partners by becoming sovereign. The Minister of Industry himself said in his speech in this House last Friday that the rules governing interprovincial trade were rather like those of the GATT in the late 1940s, and that under NAFTA, it was easier to deal with the United States than with the other Canadian provinces. That means that a sovereign Quebec could trade more easily with the Canadian provinces. We are in favour of opening international markets and Quebec was a great supporter of the free trade agreement and of NAFTA.

(1525)

Quebec industry is active in leading sectors like aerospace, telecommunications, pharmaceuticals and biotechnology in general, where Quebec is at the forefront of technology and compares favorably with any country in the world. Nevertheless, some Quebec industries have some catching up to do to remain competitive.

These industries are usually labour-intensive—textiles, furniture, clothing—and will have to adapt to face foreign competition resulting from the GATT and NAFTA. The negative impact of globalization of markets on companies and on workers in these industries must be minimized. We would have wanted to find in the speech from the throne conversion or modernization measures to help these industries remain competitive in a world of global markets.

Let us talk about industrial conversion. While the Liberals' red book made a big issue of it in the election campaign, there is not a word about it today or in the speech from the throne or in the speech by the Minister of Industry in reply to the speech from the throne. In this context, the danger facing us is that the federal government will show the same disregard as it showed by failing to help manufacturing companies adjust after the free trade agreement with the United States was signed.

Nevertheless, the red book said, "The end of the Cold War puts at risk . . . thousands of high-tech jobs. A Liberal government will introduce a defence conversion program to help industries in transition from high-tech military production to high-tech civilian production." Since then, not a word. This lack of action by the government regarding assistance to the less competitive sectors which will be affected by NAFTA and the GATT is not a good omen for the reconversion of military industries.

It must be realized that the end of the cold war has already had a major impact on the level of employment of that industry, both in Quebec and in Canada. According to the research group on military industries, in the five years between 1987 and 1992, the

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military industry in Quebec lost 48 per cent of its total sales, as well as 11,000 direct jobs. This puts numerous businesses in high tech sectors such as aerospace and telecommunications in a precarious situation. These businesses urgently need help to develop civilian applications for their products.

Take for example the case of the MIL Davie shipyard, in Lauzon. This company, which specialized in building warships, is now threatened with closing. In fact, it has already been forced to lay off 600 workers since the beginning of 1993. If nothing is done, this shipyard could well be forced to shut down after it delivers its last ship to the Canadian Navy. Yet, the company has undertaken a process to enable it to switch from military to civilian production. Under the circumstances, in order to survive, MIL Davie in Lauzon desperately needs the federal contract to build the Magdalen Islands ferry along with some assistance to design a new multipurpose or smart ship. This is the exclusive responsibility of the federal government.

Given the current situation, the construction of a high-speed rail link along the Quebec City-Trois-Rivières-Windsor corridor is extremely important since this undertaking could have a considerable impact, from both an economic and technological standpoint.

In the throne speech, the government pledged to eliminate overlap and duplication in the different levels of government. In the industrial sector, the need to streamline programs and eliminate duplication is particularly glaring.

According to a paper commissioned in September 1991 by the Treasury Board Secretariat—so it must be accurate—on overlap and duplication of federal and provincial programs, overlap is, listen to this, Madam Speaker, a major problem affecting industrial sector programs. The vast majority of these programs have not been legislated, but rather have been established pursuant to the federal government's spending power. The National Research Council, the Federal Business Development Bank, financial aid programs and business services programs, to name but a few, fall into this category. And these are facts contained in a federal government report.

(1530)

The situation is serious. In its brief to the Bélanger-Campeau Commission, the Quebec section of the Canadian Manufacturers Association wrote: "The confusion caused by this duplication leads to a massive waste of energy, time and resources and creates a permanent climate of uncertainty, while industries expect their government to maintain a stable climate and establish clear rules so that they can make plans for their development."

Madam Speaker, it is not only the waste of public funds, which is itself a serious problem. Our businesses' competitiveness is being undermined because they must work their way through a bureaucratic maze. The services that we offer to our

businesses must be subjected to a program-by-program, in-depth review. The federal government must understand that massive decentralization of the main economic levers is in the national interest of Quebec and Canada is needed and that it must stop interfering in areas where the provinces are better able to meet the needs of the population.

In the throne speech, the government also makes a commitment to present legislation to increase the transparency of the relations between lobbyists and the government. We are waiting with great interest to see what it will do in this regard.

I cannot conclude this speech without addressing, even if only for a few minutes, the basic reason for my presence here in this House. I have been fighting for Quebec's sovereignty since 1961. I have been both a player and a witness in the evolution, sometimes difficult, sometimes dramatic, of Quebec's sovereigntist movement for the last 33 years.

I would therefore like to pay tribute not only to those who have worked behind the scenes but also to the main pioneers who, from the early 60s, have succeeded in persuading thousands of Quebecers like myself of the merits of Quebec's political sovereignty.

I am thinking of Raymond Barbeau, founder of the Laurentian Alliance, of André D'Allemagne, founding president of the Rassemblement pour l'indépendance nationale (R.I.N.), of Marcel Chaput, a former federal civil servant, leader of the R.I.N. and founder of the Quebec Republican Party, of Pierre Bourgault, who became president of the R.I.N. and dissolved his own party to join, in the best interests of the cause, the Parti Québécois, newly formed in 1968 by René Lévesque, the great unifier who made the sovereigntist movement credible.

We must not forget another visionary Quebecer, Marcel Léger, who died last year. He set up the Quebec Nationalist Party, for which I ran in the riding of Trois-Rivières and which as early as 1984 offered Quebecers, especially sovereigntists, an alternative to the federalist forces to represent them in Ottawa. At that time, Quebecers preferred to try once again to renew Canadian federalism.

The speech from the throne says that the government will work vigorously to ensure that federalism meets the needs of Canadians. Madam Speaker, I will not hide my surprise from you on reading such a statement in 1994, as if it were something new.

However, Quebecers and Canadians have tried just that for 30 years, to ensure that federalism meets their needs. In the past 30 years, they have set up four royal commissions of inquiry to try to do that: in 1963, the Laurendeau-Dunton Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, which already recognized the existence of "two solitudes"; in 1977, the Pepin-Robarts Commission on Canadian Unity, hastily set up following the election of the Parti Québécois in Quebec; in 1981, the

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McDonald Commission on Economic Union, which advocated more centralized control of power in Ottawa; in 1991, the Spicer Commission on the Future of Canada; and also the Castonguay–Beaudoin–Dobbie Committee in 1992. They all tried unsuccessfully to renew Canadian federalism “with honour and enthusiasm”.

(1535)

After 30 years of discussion and Constitution conferences, after spending thousands of hours and several hundred million dollars, after producing a mountain of reports, all we came up with was a miserable little agreement, the Charlottetown Agreement, which was rejected by everyone, but for diametrically opposite reasons.

We have come to a dead end trying to renew the Canadian federation. However, what the Bloc Québécois is proposing is quite simple; sovereignty, that is the exclusive right within its territory for Quebec to pass legislation, levy taxes and be represented abroad, a right enjoyed by every other sovereign state.

The Bloc Québécois has not come here to destroy a country, but to build a new one, the state of Quebec.

[English]

Mr. Russell MacLellan (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada): Madam Speaker, I am very pleased to have this opportunity to speak on the speech from the throne. I feel it is perhaps one of the most important we have had in this century.

The previous government was able to postpone major decisions, things that needed to be done to bring this country to the point where it could reach its true potential. The people recognized that it had failed them. That is why it has only two members in the House of Commons at the present time. We can never forget that the people want good government. They want responsible government and they want their members of Parliament to give them the Canada that they envision.

We talk about unity. The single most important thing to provide unity in this country is good government. I predict that good government will hold this country together as nothing else will. If we can deliver what is in the speech from the throne, if members of this House can work together, then we can give to the people the government they want. We can also give back to ourselves and this House the prestige and the dignity that so befits this institution. Unfortunately this has not been the case in recent years. Largely it is because members of Parliament brought it on themselves.

We must look at what Canada needs. We need to deal with the debt and the deficit. Certainly when we have an economy that

pays 35 cents of every dollar for no other purpose than paying the interest on the debt it must seem to Canadians of low and middle income, and indeed to Canadians who do not have any income, as an obscene use of funding. The people of this country, so many of whom are in need, are not having their needs addressed.

We must deal with the economy, but we must remember that we are here for the people of Canada. As stated in the speech from the throne says, we must look at providing a social system that meets the needs of the nineties. That is not to say we take away what Canadians need. It means that we look at our system, discover its needs and what Canadians need, how with our technological age we can better deliver the system and how we can generate, not only work but enthusiasm for Canadians in this decade.

Taking a life is a very serious thing. I want to say to this House that wasting a life may not seem as serious but it is very serious. That is what is happening to our young people who do not have jobs. They are going from one part-time job to another. In many cases this is the most they have to look forward to. This is a tragedy in the country that the United Nations said was the most beneficial and best country in the world in which to live.

(1540)

We have a lot to do. We have a lot of self-searching to do. We must reduce the debt and the deficit but we must keep in mind the people of Canada.

In my area in Atlantic Canada there has been an absolute collapse of the ground fishery. All of us in this House are cognizant of the unemployment we suffered before this happened. However, add another 35,000 to 45,000 people who have lost their employment to that serious situation that existed before and it will give some idea of the devastation with which we are faced.

We cannot walk away from that. We cannot walk away from those people and their needs or from the aspirations of the youth of Atlantic Canada. We cannot walk away from the aboriginal people who are looking to this government and to this House of Commons to meet their needs. They have been asking for solutions for many years. We cannot abandon the people of Davis Inlet. We cannot abandon the people of northern Ontario who live in substandard housing.

The aboriginal people are a vital part of this country and we must work together to make sure that their living conditions and their future is something they can look forward to as we hope we will be looking forward to ours.

We cannot ignore the environment. We do not know what caused the devastating downturn in our ground fishery. It may very well be environmental conditions. It could be a melting of the polar ice cap which changed the temperature of the water.

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These are the situations with which we are faced today. They have been postponed and then put on to us. However, we in this House cannot postpone them in turn because the time to deal with them is now. There is nowhere else to push these problems. We have to deal with them. We must again look to working on the deficit and the debt and also keep in mind that there are things with which we must deal now.

We must also look to the needs of people today with respect to crime prevention and safety on the streets of this country. This is a major concern.

I want to say that, until one evening, I did not realize how serious the fear was for women in this country who are walking on the streets. On that evening I worked until around 10 p.m. and then I walked down Sparks Street. I tried to cross Elgin Street before the light changed so I started to run. There was a lady ahead of me and she heard these running footsteps behind her. She turned around and I saw a look of stark terror on her face because she knew there was a man behind her who started to run.

The fact is that women in this country get off from work in the dark and take the bus at this time of year. When they get off the bus and every time they pass a tree or a hedge or another building they do not know who is behind those trees, hedges or buildings. Are the elevators safe in which they are going to travel? This has to be addressed.

We have to address the problems of the youth in this country and the youth crime that is so evidently displayed. We must deal with the criminals and the victims. We must start at the very beginning to address and anticipate what is causing crime in this country. The first part is dealing with the criminals and the second part is dealing with prevention. These two go hand in hand. These two are absolutely necessary. It has been said that for every \$1 we spend on crime prevention we save \$7 in incarceration and expense in our justice system.

These are formidable challenges for members of this House of Commons.

(1545)

This is our opportunity to show Canadians that although we are faced with difficult decisions we can deal with them because as a unit, members from coast to coast to coast share a concern for Canada and its people.

We cannot talk about people in one region without talking about people in all of Canada. That is because the common thread in this country is the aspirations and present needs of these people and their children. These needs that seem to be unique to one neighbourhood have the same uniqueness in another. That means there is a common bond and there is no uniqueness. There is the common thread of personal safety and aspirations for their children. We all have the same joys and sorrows.

I therefore hope that all the representatives will have the same determination to put this country on the road to prosperity with the vision that Canadians hold for it.

[*Translation*]

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): It being 3.45 p.m., it is my duty in accordance with Standing Order 50(8) to interrupt the proceedings and put forthwith all questions necessary to dispose of the motion.

The division is on the main motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): All those in favour will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): In my opinion, the yeas have it.

And more than five members having risen:

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): Pursuant to Standing Order 45(6), the division stands deferred until 6 p.m., Tuesday, February 1, 1994.

[*English*]

It being 3.48 p.m., this House stands adjourned until Monday next at 11 o'clock a.m. pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 3.48 p.m.)

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