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**Monday, October 31, 1994**

**Speaker: The Honourable Gilbert Parent**

# HOUSE OF COMMONS

Monday, October 31, 1994

The House met at 11 a.m.

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*Prayers*

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## PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[*English*]

### IMMIGRATION ACT

The House resumed from October 24 consideration of the motion.

**Mr. Sarkis Assadourian (Don Valley North, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I assumed from reading the motion that my hon. colleague wants to stop immigrants from coming into Canada when they test positive for HIV.

Today, the way the laws of the land stand, we have testing for all kinds of viruses and the medical doctors decide who gets in. I do not think we in the House have outlined the facts as to how much it costs in each and every situation. Who can decide who can come in and who cannot? It could be tomorrow that the HIV test or the medication will cost \$10,000. Some might argue that is too much. Even a cost of \$5,000 some could argue is too much. Where do we draw the line on how much is effective?

(1105)

For that purpose the government has a law already in place so medical officers can decide who can be and who cannot be admitted to Canada on medical grounds. Also the government is reviewing the extensive information it has on HIV and will announce a decision soon about HIV cases in Canada.

Our policies have to reflect the social structures, health systems and justice system we have in Canada. Otherwise it will be disastrous for us and it will be one sided. We cannot afford to have that. Misinformation and misunderstandings about HIV are very dangerous elements that we face today. I hope in the near future the government completes its investigation and studies and comes up with a policy that will satisfy the concerns of everyone in the House and of the population at large. We take care of our own citizens first and we are compassionate enough to allow others to come into the country.

The best hope we have is to come up with a solution for HIV. I think that would make everyone happy. I suggest we keep things as they are for the time being and allow the system to work. We need medical discoveries, medical approaches and information so that we can make wise decisions on the issue. Otherwise there is nothing stopping us from coming up with a motion next week that says anybody who has cancer should not be allowed in because cancer costs too much to treat. Just about every disease in the world costs money to treat.

Where do we draw the line? Where do we start and where do we end? Since we do not know that, I am unable to make a decision on who should be admitted and who should not. On that basis I oppose the motion and wait for the government to come up with a solution after researching the matter carefully and checking the track record of the last five years so we know the expenses we are talking about for HIV.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Michel Daviault (Ahuntsic, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to speak to the motion tabled in the House on September 23 by the hon. member for Calgary Northeast. This motion, which clearly targets prospective immigrants who are HIV positive, is, by the same token, discriminatory.

To argue that their admission would put an excessive burden on our health care system is very one-sided, since that is certainly not the case. The motion discriminates particularly against people claiming refugee status, since it would make them inadmissible even before their case is heard by the Immigration and Refugee Board.

This motion should therefore be interpreted as barring immigrants, certain classes of visitors and persons claiming refugee status from entry into Canada.

Detection of the virus in these people would make them inadmissible and, as a result, prohibit them from proceeding with their visit to Canada, from immigrating to Canada, and from claiming refugee status.

Today, the Canadian government intends to take advantage of its statutory review of immigration policy. In an article published in *La Presse* on April 26, 1994, the Minister of Immigration and Citizenship was already setting the parameters for this review. He said the government was looking at the list of diseases for which testing is compulsory, to decide whether the list should also include HIV.

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Under the current Immigration Act, individuals who wish to immigrate to Canada are subject to admission criteria that do not discriminate in any way that is incompatible with the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Tests are currently carried out on a routine basis and are compulsory for a number of diseases, including tuberculosis and syphilis.

The minister went on to say that screening for HIV was not on the list. However, Canada could deny entry to individuals who were HIV positive and who had AIDS.

If a physician suspects that an immigrant is HIV positive or has AIDS, a screening test is done. At the present time, if the applicant is HIV positive, the application is automatically rejected.

(1110)

In a study by the Library of Parliament, Law and Government Division, we read that in a study on admissibility finished in 1992, it was recommended that the whole issue of routine testing for communicable and other diseases that are a burden on the health care system be reviewed.

But, for the time being, there is no indication, as my colleague from Drummond said, that universal HIV screening would save more money than targeting other diseases. Furthermore, according to a study conducted by the McGill Centre for Medicine, Ethics and Law, the economical impact of HIV infection among immigrants is similar to the impact of coronary diseases. Finally, researchers at the McGill Centre believe that mandatory AIDS testing for immigrants would be purely arbitrary.

That is why I endorse the position of our party which asks the government to create a committee that would review phase II of the Canadian strategy on the fight against AIDS. This position differs considerably from an outright fight against the admissibility of immigrants. Let me remind the House of some of the criteria we use to determine medical admissibility; these criteria are given in section 22 of the regulations related to the present legislation.

“For the purpose of determining whether any person is...a danger to public health or to public safety...or might cause excessive demands on health or social services, the following factors shall be considered by a medical officer in relation to the nature, severity or probable duration of any disease, disorder, disability or other health impairment from which the person is suffering, namely: any reports made by a medical practitioner with respect to the person; the degree to which the disease, disorder, disability or other impairment may be communicated to other persons; whether sudden incapacity or unpredictable or unusual behaviour may create a danger to public safety; whether

the supply of health...services that the person may require in Canada is limited to such an extent that: the use of such services by the person might reasonably be expected to prevent or delay provision of those services to Canadian citizens or permanent residents, or the use of such services may not be available or accessible to the person; whether medical care or hospitalization is required; whether potential employability or productivity is affected; and whether prompt and effective medical treatment can be provided”.

In 1993, 54 persons were refused for that reason. Therefore, as written, the present legislation contains all the provisions required to admit or refuse any applicant for visitor, immigrant or refugee status. I believe that this motion is, for the moment, premature to say the least. Moreover, it opens the door to discrimination towards would-be immigrants by reinforcing insidiously prejudices against them.

This motion would also be in violation of the Canadian Human Rights Act, a legislation which is the basis for several federal and provincial commissions on human rights. Several decisions and judgments confirming discrimination have been passed by these commissions under Canadian legislation on human rights.

That study summarizes the position of the commissions: “Discrimination against HIV or AIDS infected individuals is a proscribed ground of discrimination because it is based on a deficiency or handicap as defined by human rights legislation”. However, for refugee claimants who must submit to a medical examination within 60 days of their arrival in Canada, the minister recognizes that the question is sensitive. “On the one hand there are medical considerations and on the other the real fear of persecution”.

As my colleague from Calgary Northeast was saying in this House, on September 23: “The risk of admitting immigrants with HIV who likely do not even know that they are infected is one we cannot tolerate”. These are alarmist words, although I recognize the seriousness of the situation and the pandemic character of the disease. However, are we going to systematically screen for AIDS all Canadians coming home from a trip abroad on the off chance that they might not know that they have been infected by the virus? Why then specifically target visitors, immigrants and convention refugee status claimants?

Since this terrible disease is a global health problem, how else can we stop anyone, be it healthy Canadians or healthy immigrants, from contracting a HIV-related disease, if not through an efficient national awareness and prevention policy? The solution does not lie in screening only, but mostly in a vigorous awareness and prevention campaign. This disease is not circumscribed to immigrants.

*Private Members' Business*

(1115)

The way this disease is spreading, healthy landed immigrants and permanent residents may get infected by the HIV virus even in Canada.

Compulsory screening for visitors, immigrants and refugee status claimants is neither a cure nor a way to slow down the spread of the disease.

In fact, routine screening is a dubious argument which raises several questions regarding the Reform Party's position on the Immigration Act.

On October 25, the Reform member for Calgary Northeast said in this House, and I quote: "—today the *Financial Post* reported on a memo from the government's finance department which concluded that this government's immigration policies are worsening the unemployment crisis.

Is the Minister of Immigration going to act on the finance minister's conclusions or on those of the Reform member and drastically reduce immigration levels?"

The real aim of this motion is a drastic reduction in immigration levels.

As my Liberal colleague from Thunder Bay—Atikokan did before me, I want to say again that the danger of HIV infection does not come from foreigners but rather from specific practices such as sharing drug needles, unprotected sex, transfusions involving tainted blood, and not mere physical contact.

This is why the Canadian Haemophilia Society, the Red Cross, the European Parliament, and the British Medical Association all believe that visitors are not a public health threat.

Therefore, I will vote against this motion.

[*English*]

**Mr. Ed Harper (Simcoe Centre, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to rise in this House today and speak in support of Motion No. 285, a motion that the government test all immigrants to Canada for HIV positive status.

Like many of the private members' motions to come before this House, Motion No. 285 is another example of common sense. It is a simple and direct motion designed to change the way the immigration department conducts its business. It should not be necessary for this House to move such common sense procedure but this Liberal government and this minister of immigration have once again refused to put the cares and concerns of ordinary Canadians ahead of political correctness in pandering to special interest groups.

There are health implications for Canadians if we let people into this country with the disease. AIDS is communicable. AIDS

is also fatal and there are no proven treatments or cures. Once you have it, unfortunately your days are numbered. We needlessly put at risk other Canadians who may contract the disease.

We know of many ways that can happen. The disease can be passed on sexually or through blood or bodily fluids. When I visit my dentist now, he and all his staff wear latex gloves. They do not do this because some health regulation forces them to; they wear their gloves as a preventive measure. They do not want to take the risk, however small, of coming into contact with a fatal disease. Why would we as a government take the risk, however small, of exposing Canadians to the potential for receiving AIDS from an immigrant?

Why there is refusal to do mandatory testing of all immigrants for AIDS or HIV is beyond me. We have a specific section in our Immigration Act which states: "No person shall be granted entry who is suffering from disease, disorder, or disability which will likely be a danger to public health or which would cause excessive demands on health or social services". This section is there for the protection of Canadian society.

Every member in this House will agree that immigration should be a benefit to Canada and not a threat to public health or indeed the economy. Clearly the potential threat to both health and finances from AIDS carriers entering our country is cause for alarm.

In the debate on this motion so far we have not heard one rational argument about why HIV testing should not be done on all immigrants. The member for St. Denis stated: "Even if they test HIV positive they can continue contributing to Canadian society for many years". It is the refusal of some to admit the obvious that angers so many Canadians. It is totally unacceptable and a contravention of the law to allow HIV positive immigrants into Canada.

The member for Thunder Bay—Atikokan believes that "it would be inappropriate to institute a blanket exclusion of persons with HIV". He quotes the Human Rights Commission and states that "such a practice would be discriminatory".

HIV is not a discriminatory disease. It will kill anyone it comes in contact with. I support the right of Canadian citizens over the right of non-citizens to be free from discrimination.

(1120)

Saturday's *Globe and Mail* reported that the immigration minister is going to propose a tightening up of the immigration system including fewer family class immigrants and a move to allowing in those with better language skills and job skills so that the financial burden on our social programs will be reduced. These are moves in the right direction. The immigration minister should be congratulated for this reform, and I emphasize reform.

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However, the job is not finished yet. The immigrants to Canada who have more applicable job skills and speak English or French but also have AIDS will not be net contributors at all. They will be a burden on our welfare and health care systems and their presence increases the potential for others to be infected. As a guardian of the public purse I believe it is my duty to examine the costs involved in both the government's stated course of action and the measures proposed by this bill.

The government avoids performing a \$12, I will emphasize \$12, test for AIDS on every immigrant who comes into Canada, not the proposed \$10,000 as was alluded to earlier by a member from the other side but \$12. With the current level of 250,000 immigrants a year that is a saving of three million tax dollars. What are the costs of failing to perform such a test? The average health cost of caring for one person with AIDS is \$250,000. If there are absolutely no immigrants coming to Canada with AIDS then indeed we have saved ourselves \$3 million.

However we have no idea how many immigrants are coming into Canada with AIDS. What if there are a mere 20 a year reaching our land with this fatal disease? The cost of caring for these 20 would be \$5 million. If the number is 200, the cost is \$50 million. Is it not worth \$3 million to conduct this basic test?

The Reform Party promised to be a constructive alternative in Parliament and offer solutions to the overspending problems of government. I do not believe we need to allocate new resources to this important task. We can point out some current expenditures that could be reallocated for the purposes of conducting mandatory testing.

The federal Ministry of Health devotes an incredible amount of its resources toward the goal of AIDS prevention and elimination. The department spends over \$40 million a year on such programs. Less than half of this money is spent on actual research to develop treatments or vaccines. Most of this funding goes toward yet another government bureaucracy, the Canadian AIDS Secretariat, and special interest groups.

I would like to give some examples of the kind of nonsense that tax dollars have recently been frittered away on. There was the \$35,000 spent on a centrefold in a homosexual magazine on the impact of AIDS. There was another \$35,000 for a six month project called "The Puppets Against AIDS Tour". A group in New Brunswick received \$128,000 to work for the empowerment of people with AIDS.

What is the net benefit to Canadians of this type of funding? What did the empowering do for the health problem? Does it bring us closer to a cure? Who does it really educate? Would this money not be better spent on AIDS testing for immigrants?

The goal of any public health campaign is clear: prevention of disease. One way to prevent the spread of disease in Canada is to eliminate new sources of the disease.

We have a dilemma on our hands. On the one hand the Liberal government has a policy in the department of health to prevent the transmission of AIDS and it spends big dollars doing it. On the other hand the immigration department has a policy which allows into Canada an unknown number of AIDS carriers. This is not the only area of Liberal government policy where we can see a contradiction.

The ministry of agriculture has looked at this type of issue already. We have all read about mad cow disease in Britain, a fatal disorder that attacks the nervous system of cattle. Our Agriculture Canada people have put down all the cattle imported into Canada from Britain since the time of the outbreak in 1986. The reason for this is simple. The disease can be passed on to other animals. We decided the risk of this happening, however small, was not worth the few cattle that were put down. It would seem that when it comes to the potential to contact fatal disease this Liberal government places the value of Canadian farm animals higher than it does that of Canadian citizens.

I want to point out one final example of contradiction in public health policy. We recently witnessed Health Canada officials at airports across Canada examining flights arriving from India, a country recently experiencing an outbreak of pneumonic plague. Much care and attention was focused on prevention by screening our borders. Pneumonic plague is easily treatable and poses no serious health threat to Canada. Yet much was done to deal with the situation. Why the same attention is not paid to detecting AIDS, a far more deadly disease, at our borders is just ridiculous.

(1125)

The time for action is now. We must deal with this problem before more lives are put at risk or taxpayers' dollars are thrown away. AIDS testing of immigrants is just plain common sense. Let us do it by supporting Motion No. 285.

**Mr. Reg Alcock (Winnipeg South, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I want to take the time I have available to talk about something which has been causing me increasing concern as I have listened to the debates that have been proffered by members of the Reform Party.

We heard Reform Party members talk over and over again about the need to represent the interests of what they call real Canadians or ordinary Canadians, how they as members of Parliament have a duty and a responsibility to assess opinion from their constituents and to bring that forward to public view and discuss those issues that are important to the people they

represent. I agree with that. That is a fundamental role each and every one of us has when we get elected and come to this House.

We have a second role. We sit in a very privileged position. We sit in the middle of an information flow and have access to resources, information and knowledge that few Canadians have. That imposes a burden upon us, a responsibility to educate and not to simply pander to those things that are of momentary or immediate concern. We must evaluate issues. We must examine them. We must research them. We must come forward to this Chamber with debates and arguments that are based on fact and some sort of presentation of a solution that will improve the lives of people.

To simply victimize groups for cheap short term headlines is irresponsible. Unfortunately that is what I see in this. It is very easy. There are many people in the community who are scared to death of AIDS. It is a terrifying prospect. Surely we who have access to the experts and access to the information can take the time to learn about the issue, can take the time to learn about the work that is being done and bring forward responsible decisions not to inflame that fear.

We have heard it over and over again: youth crime is out of control; immigrants are a drain on society; aboriginals are lazy. That is what we are getting day after day.

The member for Simcoe Centre made a comment about pandering. If there is pandering going on, it is the Reform Party pandering to every nasty instinct that people have and doing nothing to try to advance a different view of this country.

**Mr. Harper (Simcoe Centre):** Doing nothing, look in the mirror.

**Mr. Alcock:** Mr. Speaker, I would remind members that I sat and listened very carefully to the member for Simcoe Centre. I would simply ask that they allow me to do the same. I realize they might be a little afraid to have this kind of talk. They certainly do not appear to understand it.

The fact is that daily we in this Chamber confront a great many very difficult issues. Listening to the members opposite one would think that every adolescent was committing crimes when we know that many of our programs for young people have been very effective. In fact, we know that the majority of young people are living responsible lives, but we do not hear that from across the floor.

We do not hear about the successes in aboriginal communities. We hear about the failures. We do not hear about the successes in immigration, or the successes in multiculturalism, or the successes and the strengths that are given to this country through diversity. We hear about the problems.

### *Private Members' Business*

Those members do a great disservice to their own constituencies. They do a great disservice to the people of this country when they simply pander to the feeling that somehow we have become better by hating or rejecting or excluding people.

(1130)

I had an experience some years ago. I was talking with a woman, a professional colleague who is a psychologist. In the middle of the conversation she broke down. She shared with me that she had AIDS. She did not have AIDS, but was actually HIV positive. Her husband was a hemophiliac. He got AIDS through a tainted blood supply and transmitted it to her. She now has full blown AIDS and will no doubt not be with us soon.

That is a terrifying prospect, but when we look at that we know that AIDS is not as virulent or as rampant or as contagious a disease as some people believe. Yes, it is transmittable. There are significant health risks. We should examine those risks. That is a fact and yes, we do. Yet people are so sensitive to this disease, so concerned about it, that they wave it as a banner in front of everybody who wants to be terrified by it or every homophobic individual in the country. All they do is victimize the people who are dealing with a tragedy in their lives.

I urge members to think about that when they bring forward resolutions to the House. There is a screening process. There is medical examination of immigrants. The government reviews those regularly. We acted in this House some years ago to stop putting categorical lists in place because it categorically discriminated against people. There are policies in place that call for qualified medical personnel to examine people and make decisions about their medical admissibility. It is passing strange to me that the members opposite choose HIV as the one to mount their fight on. They need to examine very carefully their motives for entering into this debate.

**Mr. Myron Thompson (Wild Rose, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, it must be nice to be part of a government of responsible people who simply take the attitude: "Let us all be happy; things are fine".

That seems to be the attitude that often comes across. I really object to that because as my colleague from the Reform Party said a few minutes ago, if we applied common sense to a lot of things we are talking about, just straight, old common sense, it should ring a few bells. Apparently there are no bells to ring on that side of the House.

Many will say that any member rising in this House to support mandatory HIV testing of immigrants and refugees entering Canada is doing so because of moral judgment. Let me first say that no moral judgment is behind my supporting this member's bill. My support for this bill is based solely on one concern and one concern only. That is public safety. Before anyone can discuss whether all immigrants and refugees must pass a

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mandatory HIV test to live in Canada, it is necessary to research the history and the transmission of HIV.

The unknowns are what we should be concerned about. The unknowns surrounding the infection of Canadians by HIV and the transmission of this virus to other Canadians must be addressed. As most Canadians know, those engaging in homosexual or bisexual activity and those engaging in heterosexual contact with persons of high risk are dealing with the two largest sectors of our society that test positively for HIV. What is seldom talked about is the third largest sector of HIV positive Canadians, those who are HIV positive with no identifiable risk factor.

How can someone who is not homosexual, bisexual, an injection drug user, or who does not associate with these high risk individuals become HIV positive? Science cannot answer that question. Science can say that human immunodeficiency virus, HIV, is offering one of the most difficult challenges to those actively engaged in understanding how this virus works.

(1135)

What is understood is that there are two known types of HIV, HIV-1 and HIV-2. The predominant virus in Canada is HIV-1 which is considered by scientists as the most serious viral form.

Scientists also say HIV is the most studied virus in history but much remains to be learned about it. It is known HIV is retro-virus. It consists of RNA and must invade the DNA of living cells to replicate. It is believed that HIV may require one or more co-factors that act together to cause full blown AIDS. What those co-factors are have not been identified.

It is also believed by scientists that HIV is the most genetically variable virus yet discovered and that worldwide there are at least five subgroups of HIV-1, the most dangerous form of the virus. This virus is known to mutate rapidly and is known to recombine with other HIV strains. This mutation can change the manner HIV infects the host and may change the manner in which the virus can be transmitted.

Of Canadians known to be HIV positive and have developed AIDS, 4.5 per cent have no known identified risk factor that would explain why they became HIV positive. That particular stat worries me and it should worry every member of this House.

There is currently no known cure or preventable measure that will end the worldwide threat to humanity posed by this virus. To be infected by this virus is considered a slow death penalty of great suffering.

We have Canadians who have practised every known method to reduce the risk of HIV infection and yet they are known to be HIV positive. Can we allow those outside of Canada to bring different strains of HIV into this country to readily mutate with the strains already here? Can the rapid mutation of HIV and

possible unknown variations of HIV cause the infection of those known not to engage in risk behaviours? Could introducing a new strain of HIV to Canadians develop a mutated version of the virus that we presently have that would allow far easier infection of Canadians?

I do not know the answers to these questions and it appears the scientists who are studying this do not know either.

Under current immigration regulations anyone presumed to be a drain on Canada's health care system can be refused authority to immigrate to Canada and HIV positive status is now a legitimate reason to prevent immigration to Canada.

I understand this may change if this government accepts a proposal to allow anyone into Canada who would not be a drain on the medical system for five years. It is known to take seven to ten years from infection by HIV to require enormous medical need. Those not showing symptoms nor admitting to HIV positive status or are unaware they are HIV positive who are now entering Canada will require either large medical expenses in the future or maybe a threat to spread the HIV virus.

Public safety also means no one has the right to spread a health threatening virus. It is a legitimate purpose of law in this nation to protect individuals and communities from health threatening possibilities and the cost of HIV infection.

Public safety also dictates this government maintain a public health system that will be available for our citizens. In 1992 the average demand on our health care system per citizen was \$2,247. An individual with progressive HIV infection after seven to ten years will require an expenditure of \$70,000 to \$100,000 per year. Every HIV positive person who requires known medication will use up to 40 times the medical expense used for every Canadian.

The unknowns of how HIV mutations will affect positive individuals and transmission of the virus from positive individuals to others are still being investigated. The total potential cost to the health care system by HIV positive individuals is not known.

Whether we can afford this total cost when we all know cuts will be necessary to health care financing if Canada is to keep our health care system accessible to all is not known. All these issues concern public health and safety and must be stated to Canadians. I believe that Canadians have no argument with allowing immigrants and refugees to live in Canada if they will not be an unnecessary and extravagant drain on their tax dollars or a threat to their health. I believe allowing individuals into Canada without knowing who may spread the virus or whether their cost to the health care system may be so large that the majority of Canadians will be denied adequate health care assistance in the future is too great a risk for the majority of Canadians to accept.

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(1140)

Since exposure to HIV infection may lead to AIDS which is plainly life threatening, it is a legitimate purpose of law to protect individuals, communities and this nation from the spread of the virus. That is why I support the member's bill requesting mandatory HIV testing for all immigrants and refugees entering Canada. I believe the majority of Canadians would agree with me.

In 1968 my wife and I and my small child arrived in Canada. When we were at the immigration office it was explained that we had to have certain things in terms of money available and a few other things.

**Mr. Bellemare:** Were you tested?

**Mr. Thompson:** If the member will be quiet for a minute I will tell him about the medical requirements.

I was required to go the doctor as were my wife and baby. We were given probably one of the most thorough medical examinations we have ever gone through with the clear understanding that if there was anything wrong, any medical reason from tuberculosis on down or any kind of heart disease problem, whatever it may be, it would be cause for grounds not to be able to enter this country.

We accepted that as being wise. Had we not passed we would not have come.

**Mr. Bellemare:** They should have given you an attitude test.

**An hon. member:** Little boy, what are you going to be when you grow up?

**Mr. Thompson:** Once again, it is just common sense that it was done. We accepted it and we are very grateful that we passed the test.

**Mr. Peter Milliken (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. I think you would find unanimous consent of the House that we go to Statements by Ministers, interrupting whatever business may be in progress at one o'clock this day, as arranged.

The proposal is that at one o'clock whatever business is before the House be then interrupted so that we can go Statements by Ministers for the purpose of allowing the Prime Minister to make a statement.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger):** The House has heard the terms of the motion.

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

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Mr. Alex Shepherd (Durham, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to enter the debate on this motion by the hon. member for Calgary Northeast. I congratulate the hon. member for bringing this matter to the House. I am certain that HIV testing is a major concern of most people in Canada.

There is a great deal of concern about this disease. I believe the whole medical profession is evolving in its attitude toward the disease and in trying to find a cure for it.

I can speak from personal knowledge because I watched the son of a friend die from this very debilitating disease. I watched that young man lose weight, go into trauma. It was a very traumatic experience for us all. The effect it has on families and friends cannot be measured by anyone who has not experienced that.

In addition, I have also had the advantage of travelling around the world a bit. One country I was able to visit was Kenya. Kenya as some may know has a major problem with this disease, much more than we do. In some ways it has reached epidemic proportions in that country. In spite of my own experiences with the disease and watching people suffer from it, I have to reject the motion of my friend. I reject it not from an uncaring point of view but rather the importance of getting this thing right.

In other words it is very important that we start monitoring our immigrant population coming into our country. However, we must get the system correct. By getting it right, I mean the minister is now conducting a review of this whole area. In that process he is consulting medical practitioners. He is basically trying to get the system correct from day one.

(1145)

Most Canadians recognize this is a very serious disease. However, authorities are somewhat split on how important a disease it is and how it affects the host population. For instance, this disease cannot be spread by personal contact; most medical practitioners do not believe it has reached crisis proportions in our population and do not regard it as a serious public health or safety threat.

Why is it important to get things right? This is the whole essence of this debate. It is not so much in monitoring our immigrant population, those coming into our country, but rather the effect we can have on the current population in recognizing this important disease.

In looking at the Immigration Act, I note in 1952 that our country disallowed the admission of immigrant populations that were disabled for medical reasons. That was not that long ago. How would our resident population of disabled people feel when their own country denied access to this nation because people were disabled? I suggest that it would make them feel like second class citizens. Many in our population do have AIDS. We



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must use every resource we have to try to do away with this important disease.

It is also crucial we do not give the opinion, from the government point of view, that there is something inordinately wrong with these people, that if they want to come into the country they would be denied, that they are second class citizens.

I know that the disease itself, even in testing positive for HIV, does not mean that you have the disease. As a consequence, today as we talk, there is no clear way to effect the admissibility of immigrants coming into this population; there is no real way to measure whether they have the disease.

I note that currently the practice is that where there is a suspicion of the disease, the authorities do require testing, and they do deny admissibility. However, it is done on a selective basis, it is not done on a comprehensive basis which maybe the hon. member had anticipated.

In conclusion, it is very important that we get it right. I do not think we are really disagreeing with the importance of the monitoring process; what we are talking about is how to get it right. We have to get it right not only so that we monitor people coming into our country but we get it right in our attitude as to how to deal properly with this very important disease in our own country.

**Mr. Hanger:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order on the right of reply. I seek the unanimous consent of the House for a two-minute conclusion to this debate.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger):** Let me be helpful to you. The member for Durham had concluded his remarks. I assured myself that he has closed debate.

The hon. member for Calgary Northeast who is the mover of this motion is asking the consent of the House, and I think in the spirit of this 35th session of Parliament that people agree—

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger):** The House understands fully that the member is closing off debate. No one else will speak to this motion and the question will be put forthwith in two minutes.

**Mr. Art Hanger (Calgary Northeast, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I urge all members of the House to support this motion. It is time that we sent a strong, non-partisan, non-political message to the immigration minister and to the government. It is time to put Canadians first. It is time to enforce the preamble to the Immigration Act that charges us with responsibility for the protection and safety of Canadians.

HIV-AIDS has been politicized. It has become a partisan issue and that is a crying shame. We tend to forget that the politics of this disease has prevented Canada from taking action to eliminate it. It has cost us untold numbers of lives.

This motion does nothing more than extend Canada's regulations regarding the entry of people with serious transmittable diseases to the most serious transmittable disease of all. That is not intolerance. That is not special interest pandering. It is not regressive. It is common sense.

If we in the House have a duty to exercise leadership in the interests of doing right for Canadians we have a duty to do more than just pander to our respective blocks of voters. We have a duty to do more than gauge the winds of special interest opinion.

This is what my colleague, the minister of immigration, has done for the past year. It has led to a year of non-action, a year in which the legitimacy of our immigration program has been severely undermined. For immigration to continue in Canada it must have the support of the Canadian people. It must command respect. In order for it to command respect in the eyes of the public, the program must be seen to be protecting and furthering the needs and interests of Canadians.

Protecting HIV-AIDS, giving it special status simply because of its politics is the very opposite to protecting the needs of Canadians. It must stop.

The House should be in the business of creating and maintaining an immigration program that works for everyone. We can do nothing less.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger):** It being 11.51 a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 93, the time provided for debate has expired.

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

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

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

**Some hon. members:** Yea.

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

**Some hon. members:** Nay.

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

*And more than five members having risen:*

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

(1210)

*And the bells having rung:*

**Mr. Boudria:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. This being a private member's ballot item, there is an understanding that we will vote by rows as is traditionally done for private members' hour and not the system that is used for government bills.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger):** We will be voting row by row. It should be a great way to start the week.

As is the practice the division will be taken row by row, starting with the mover and then proceeding with those in favour of the motion sitting on the same side of the House as the mover; then those in favour of the motion sitting on the other side of the House will be called; and those opposed to the motion will be called in the same order.

(1220)

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

*(Division No. 94)*

**YEAS**

Members

Assad	Bodnar
Bridgman	Brown (Calgary Southeast)
Bélair	Caccia
Duncan	Epp
Forsyth	Frazier
Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier)	Gilmour
Hanger	Hanrahan
Harper (Calgary West)	Harper (Simcoe Centre)
Hart	Hayes
Hermanson	Hill (MacLeod)
Hill (Prince George—Peace River)	Hoepfner
Hopkins	Iftody
Jennings	Jordan
Karygiannis	Lincoln
Loney	Maloney
Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)	Mayfield
McClelland (Edmonton Southwest)	McCormick
Meredith	Mills (Broadview—Greenwood)
Mills (Red Deer)	Morrison
Nault	Pickard (Essex—Kent)
Proud	Ramsay
Rideout	Ringma
Schmidt	Scott (Skeena)
Silye	Simmons
Solberg	Thompson
Wappel	White (Fraser Valley West)—52

**NAYS**

Members

Alcock	Allmand
Anderson	Assadourian
Augustine	Bachand
Berger	Bertrand
Bevilacqua	Blondin—Andrew
Bonin	Bouchard
Boudria	Brown (Oakville—Milton)
Calder	Catterall
Chrétien (Frontenac)	Clancy
Collenette	Collins
Copps	Culbert
Daviault	Debien
de Savoye	DeVillers
Dhaliwal	Dromisky
Duceppe	Duhamel
Finestone	Finlay
Gaffney	Gagliano
Gagnon (Bonaventure—Îles-de-la-Madeleine)	Gauthier (Roberval)
Godfrey	Godin
Goodale	Guay
Guimond	Harb
Harvard	Hickey
Irwin	Jackson

*Government Orders*

Jacob	Kirkby
Knutson	Lalonde
Landry	Langlois
Lavigne (Beauharnois—Salaberry)	Leroux (Shefford)
Malhi	Marchand
Marleau	Massé
McKinnon	McLellan (Edmonton Northwest)
Mercier	Milliken
Minna	Murphy
Murray	Nunez
O'Reilly	Peters
Picard (Drummond)	Richardson
Robichaud	Rock
Rompkey	Sauvageau
Scott (Fredericton—York—Sunbury)	Shepherd
St-Laurent	Steckle
Stewart (Northumberland)	Szabo
Telegdi	Thalheimer
Tobin	Torsney
Tremblay (Rimouski—Témiscouata)	Valeri
Vanclief	Young —88

**PAIRED MEMBERS**

Members

nil/aucun

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger):** Order. I wonder if I might ask a few of our colleagues for verification of their votes, specifically, the member for Burin—St. George's and Broadview—Greenwood. Could they indicate to the Chair if it was their intent to vote in favour of the motion?

The member for Broadview—Greenwood?

**Mr. Mills (Broadview—Greenwood):** Yes, Mr. Speaker, I stood and I was in favour of the motion.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger):** The member for Burin—St. George's?

**Mr. Simmons:** Yes, Mr. Speaker, I was pleased to support the motion.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger):** I declare the motion lost.

**GOVERNMENT ORDERS**

[Translation]

**CANADIAN ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT ACT**

**Hon. Sheila Copps (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Environment, Lib.)** moved that Bill C-56 to amend the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act be read a second time and referred to a committee.

She said: Mr. Speaker, we are debating today how to make good legislation even better. This bill sets out to improve one of the most outstanding environment acts in the world. With the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act and its important amendments, Canada will be a world leader in environmental thinking and practice. We are also making this country a better place to be.

*Government Orders**[English]*

The Canadian Environmental Assessment Act was first planned by the current Leader of the Opposition in 1989 when he was Minister of the Environment. We were in opposition at the time. I was the Liberal critic for the environment.

Our party supported the hon. member for Lac-Saint-Jean in his efforts and voted in favour of the act. We put aside our partisan differences and voted for legislation which was good for the environment and good for Canada.

We supported the hon. member and wanted the law proclaimed. Indeed it was a red book promise because the law, as it previously existed, was complicated, arbitrary, unpredictable and incomplete.

*[Translation]*

We needed new legislation to simplify the process and strengthen it.

**Mr. Landry:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. We do not have French translation and cannot follow what the minister is saying in English.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger):** We will certainly look into this and take the necessary steps to remedy the problem. In the meantime, I would ask the hon. Minister of the Environment to carry on with her speech.

*[English]*

**Ms. Copps:** Mr. Speaker, the new law will ensure that the environmental impact of projects is taken into account before the projects go ahead. The new law nourishes and reinforces the link between environmental health, economic health and human health.

The act finally addresses the important issues which are so crucial to Canada. The new system is straightforward and streamlined. Small scale, routine matters will be dealt with through a simple screening process. We do not need to spend taxpayers' money to hold a grand inquisition for repairs to the roof of a building.

On the other hand, large projects or environmentally sensitive projects will receive the comprehensive public study they need. It is absolutely essential that projects in our national parks, nuclear power plants, dams, mines and new industrial developments undergo comprehensive environmental impact studies.

*[Translation]*

The act introduces the new principle of mediation. To the extent possible, we want environmental problems to be resolved by consensus to everyone's satisfaction.

(1225 )

*[English]*

Screening, comprehensive study and mediation will eliminate the waste and bureaucracy that unfortunately sometimes results in much time being spent on minor or easily resolved issues.

A project will only reach the stage of review by an independent public panel if there are difficult environmental issues which cannot be resolved in any other way. When the environmental impact is important enough to be subject to an independent review, the act allows for full public involvement and requires a more stringent assessment of the project.

For all projects we want everything out in the open and we want to ensure that the public interest is paramount.

*[Translation]*

It comes as no surprise that, referring to the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, the hon. member for Lac-Saint-Jean said, back in December 1989: "This will probably be the best legislation of the kind in the world". No wonder that, last month, the Leader of the Opposition described this act as his baby, adding that he had fought very hard for it in cabinet.

*[English]*

Maybe we should not be talking about babies.

*[Translation]*

No wonder that the Leader of the Opposition said: "I am not against this legislation. I never said a thing against it". And the present Leader of the Opposition suggested last month: "We must find a way to harmonize provincial and federal jurisdictions. These two levels of government have to work together, otherwise it will be chaos".

To opponents of the act, the hon. member for Lac-Saint-Jean said in 1990: "We have jurisdiction. We take our responsibilities. If work is carried out in James Bay that can affect the nature and composition of Hudson's Bay's water, the federal government has the right, indeed the duty, to stop work, otherwise the courts will step in".

The Canadian Environmental Assessment Act emphasizes the importance of federal-provincial co-operation and the harmonization of our respective systems. I am committed to working with each of the provinces to that end.

We are willing to work with the provinces; the federal government did in fact sign a harmonization agreement with Alberta, and next week I will sign a second agreement with Manitoba. We are also negotiating with Saskatchewan, British Columbia, Ontario and the Atlantic Provinces.

*Government Orders*

I know that everyone in this country is concerned about the environment. Whatever our political differences, we all want a livable world for our children. We may not always agree on the approach, but we want the same results. It was clearly stated in the red book that we would reinforce the power of review panels by letting Cabinet deal with federal projects, and I am going to go even further.

If I may, I would like to quote from the red book: "Individual Canadians have expertise and a valued perspective to contribute to environmental policy-making. These assets are often not tapped because of financial or legal restrictions. A Liberal government will amend the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act to legally recognize intervenor funding as an integral component of the assessment process".

These were public commitments. Today, we are delivering the goods.

To those who are still questioning the act, I will quote the Leader of the Opposition, when he was talking about the old offer: "Current guidelines are not clear regarding federal-provincial co-operation on joint assessments". We are aware of the need for clarification and we are working on it. The result can be seen today. That is why we have this bill today.

(1230)

I urge the Opposition to listen carefully to what Lucien Bouchard said about the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act: "This bill does not encroach on provincial jurisdiction". It was not the current Minister of the Environment but the former Minister of the Environment—when he was a federal Cabinet minister—who said that we must ensure that there is no encroachment and step up harmonization efforts in order to avoid overlap.

[*English*]

For the last year the federal government has met with and listened to Canadians, environmentalists, communities, businesses and individuals. They have asked us to act further to improve the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act and we have listened in good faith. The amendments we are introducing today are proof of that good faith.

The bill we are debating today proposes to entrench in federal law the principle of one project one assessment. It is wrong that responsible businesses may be subjected to more than one federal assessment for their project.

We need a strong, open public environmental assessment process but we do not need it repeated and repeated and repeated. Today's legislation commits us to ending confusion and overlap and to reducing cost and complexity.

The second amendment guarantees that communities will receive the support they need to take part in major environmental assessments. Local communities with a direct stake in the outcome of an environmental assessment must have the resources to participate if their rights are to have any real meaning. I use the example under the past process of Elliot Lake which obviously had a very direct interest in how the operations of Denison were decommissioned.

The last amendment requires the federal cabinet to respond to any recommendations of independent review panels. This means that no individual cabinet minister can overrule the environmental assessment made by an independent panel. This means that no Kemano projects can be signed behind closed doors. This means that as a government we are willing to be fair, to open up the process, to simplify the process, to listen to concerns and ultimately to take a full cabinet decision. Once again we have built it into the law in black and white.

We are not only talking about our belief in the principle of one project one assessment.

[*Translation*]

This is not only about the right of people from Chicoutimi, the Abitibi region, Quebec City or Montreal to have their say on environmental assessments. The bill establishes a participant funding program to help people who do not have the necessary financial resources exercise this right. How can anyone accuse the federal government of undermining the environmental rights of the people from the Lac-Saint-Jean region, when we give them the funds they need to participate in the environmental assessments of the projects affecting them?

This amendment has nothing to do with Ottawa politicians trying to impose their views. Rather, it is aimed, as the Leader of the Opposition realized, at giving the people from the Lac-Saint-Jean region the power to tell the federal government what they think about a federal project. It is aimed at giving the people from the Lac-Saint-Jean region the ability to influence federal decisions affecting them directly in their daily lives.

[*English*]

We are not just talking about ending backroom pressures to overturn environmental assessment. We have introduced legislation to take away the ability of any individual cabinet minister to overturn those decisions. We have introduced legislation to make sure that the recommendations of independent panels cannot be shoved on to the back burner.

(1235)

The new law puts the onus on cabinet to respond to those recommendations. In the name of fairness and openness and in order to make sure that everything is completely transparent, we are acting to make sure that the whole government by virtue of cabinet is responsible for environmental assessment decisions.

*Government Orders**[Translation]*

Yes, this bill recognizes the essential federal role in environmental assessment. As the Leader of the Opposition said so well: "The federal government certainly has some powers which no one contests". For example, the bed of Hudson Bay belongs to the federal government. This would not change. So as I said and I repeat, if work goes on in James Bay which affects the nature and composition of the water emptying into Hudson Bay so that marine or other life in Hudson Bay could be affected, the federal government has the right and even the duty to act; otherwise, the courts will stop the work.

The Leader of the Opposition understands the law well and he was right when he described some federal responsibilities. It is not only legal; it is a matter of environmental reality. When you throw something into Hudson Bay, it affects northern Quebec. When you throw something into Hamilton Bay, it affects Montreal. Consider the International Joint Commission for the Great Lakes; what we do in these Great Lakes obviously affects the St. Lawrence River.

If a project on the north shore of Lake Superior is an environmental disaster, the problems end up not only in the Great Lakes but also in the St. Lawrence and the people of Montreal, Trois-Rivières, Quebec City and Rimouski suffer as a result. Environmental blunders in the Great Lakes affect Magdalen Islanders. Environmental problems do not respect borders. We have no choice but to face up to our shared environmental responsibilities. We must all come to an understanding here in Canada. The federal and provincial governments must work together, despite our political differences, to solve these problems, for the greater well-being of our people.

*[English]*

It is for the good of the people that we have to set aside our political differences, set aside our political agendas, and understand the point made by the Leader of the Opposition when he was in government and said the time had come to end the duplication and confusion that surrounded the EARP guidelines.

*[Translation]*

We must present a common front internationally to solve global environmental problems. We must work together to solve our common problems with the United States. We must work together to solve our problems in the Pacific, the Atlantic and the Arctic.

We have acted, we are acting and we will act to put in place what the Leader of the Opposition has rightly called absolutely major legislation. We must go further. We must overcome our differences and find a way to reach agreement. I am counting on my colleagues in the Official Opposition to support the bill initiated by their own leader, which will benefit all the people of Quebec and Canada.

*[English]*

Sound environmental practices are essential if we are to move to the day when pollution prevention becomes a central part of our thinking. Sound practices are essential in planning projects which are environmentally and economically sound. Sound practices are essential to planning and creating a better future.

The legislation does not solve every environmental problem in the country. We will need to fine tune the legislation. That is why we have a one-year monitoring program in place. If there are real problems, let us move to solve them. If we can make more improvements, let us move ahead. If we can find new ways of eliminating overlap, of saving taxpayers' money, and of co-operating and harmonizing our efforts, let us do it.

The bill moves forward the federal government's commitment in meeting our obligation to the environment which all of us share and which all of us cherish. Not only does the act move in that direction, but certainly the amendments we are discussing today speak very specifically to making the law workable for all Canadians in the interests of a sustainable environment.

(1240)

*[Translation]*

**Mrs. Monique Guay (Laurentides, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, Bill C-56, an Act to amend the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, which was announced on October 6, is now at second reading.

This legislation includes three amendments to the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, as announced by the minister on October 6. That announcement almost went unnoticed, since the paper on social program reform had been tabled the day before. The minister's decision to make the announcement on that day was obviously an attempt to create a diversion, given the controversy generated by the reform proposal tabled by her colleague, the Minister of Human Resources Development.

The method used by the minister can certainly not be called transparent and open. On that day, the minister announced a piece of legislation which was first developed in 1990 when our current leader, who was then Minister of the Environment, tabled Bill C-78 on the environmental assessment process. That legislation was reintroduced in May 1991 as Bill C-13. In December of the same year, a legislative committee made over 150 amendments to the original bill. Several provisions and clauses were deleted, reworded or added.

However, the flexibility which had characterized Bill C-78 had completely disappeared and been replaced by a very strict legislative intent. Moreover, one of these amendments, which affirms the federal government's intention to promote sustainable development, clearly indicates that the federal government considers itself the sole responsible for the renewal of resources, even though these fall under provincial jurisdiction.

*Government Orders*

Bill C-13 was passed by Parliament in June 1992. The long delay before the proclamation of the bill was due to the need to draft the regulations required to implement the act, and also to the desire of the current Minister of the Environment to introduce the amendments which we are now examining at second reading.

Following all these changes, it is clear that the current centralizing vision does not agree with the original legislation tabled by our leader when he was Minister of the Environment. In an article published in *Le Devoir* on April 1, 1992, Mr. Michel Yergeau, a prominent lawyer specializing in environmental law, reminded those who were trying to justify federal interference in fields of provincial jurisdiction by invoking the fact that the original legislation had been drafted under Mr. Bouchard's responsibility, that the then Minister of the Environment was very aware of the constitutional realities imposed by the nature of environmental problems.

Mr. Yergeau quoted part of a speech made by the Leader of the Opposition who stated that in the grey areas, where the Constitution does not clearly define the role of each of the stakeholders, we must have co-operation. He added that, at a time when we realize that the debate on the environment is the fight for life itself and that this fight must be taken up by the whole world, and not affect only our own jurisdictions, our constituents would not understand and even less tolerate a wrestling match between federal and provincial politicians.

Moreover, the spirit of the ruling by the Supreme Court in 1992, in the Oldman River case, essentially boiled down to respect for provincial jurisdictions. The Court ruled that the assessment process provided for by the order did not apply to projects undertaken pursuant to federal legislation, and I quote: "On the issue of the positive obligation to regulate, Mr. Justice LaForest indicated that it was not intended that the guidelines order be applied every time a project could have an environmental impact of an area of federal jurisdiction". He added: "The federal minister or the panel cannot use the guidelines order as a disguised tool to impinge on areas under provincial jurisdiction that have nothing to do with the relevant field of federal jurisdiction".

(1245)

We must admit that all the amendments made to this legislation between the time it was first introduced and the time it was enacted changed completely the spirit of the reform proposed by the Leader of the Opposition in 1989. Bill C-78 was designed to harmonize the assessment processes and not to put under federal supervision the processes already in place in Quebec and in other provinces.

Despite these revealing statements on the true spirit and purpose of the original bill, the minister jumped on the opportunity to give credit to the Leader of the Official Opposition for this legislation. In fact, the minister always uses this defensive strategy when we ask questions regarding environmental matters that date back to the period when our leader was Minister of the Environment. Could it be that the minister is looking for a good example or even for a guide to help her run her department? If she continues to link everything she does to our leader, Canadians will wonder whether our leader is still running this department or whether he has simply become the minister's mentor.

But knowing the minister and her political ways, which are always of a partisan nature, we have to conclude that this is just a strategy to slow down the Official Opposition. She uses the alleged inaction of her predecessors to try and justify her own incompetence.

The minister obviously thinks that she just has to refer to our leader's past and we will buy everything she wants to sell us, but she is wrong. We will reject all of her proposals that do not respect the environment and we will protest against any infringement on the provinces' jurisdiction. Already, in 1992, the Bloc had expressed its strong opposition to Bill C-13 because it did not recognize the existence of a provincial environmental assessment process in Quebec. I also want to remind the minister that the Bloc Québécois made a biting reply to the promulgation of the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act.

I also remind her that the government of Quebec reacted the same way. Mr. Jacques Brassard, provincial Minister of the Environment, even withdrew Quebec's representatives from federal-provincial discussions. The new Quebec environment minister described this new federal environmental assessment process as an arrogant attempt at displacing Quebec from that jurisdiction. He went on to say that this is precisely what business people were asking his government to avoid, that business executives think having two assessment processes will be a disaster for the Quebec economy.

The Quebec minister states that developers of all kinds will be faced with two processes having two different sets of requirements. He said: "It is clearly unacceptable to Quebec. It smacks of provocation, arrogance and lack of respect for Quebec".

As I already indicated, Quebec announced it was pulling out of discussions initiated by the federal government on environmental requirements harmonization because those discussions are a sham. The Quebec minister said: "They have gone too far. This bill is a deliberate act of provocation on the part of the federal government against the new sovereignist government in Quebec. It amounts to putting the province under a kind of guardianship".

*Government Orders*

The federal minister nonetheless proclaims a so-called new era of co-operation, but it is nothing but window dressing. It clearly demonstrates the centralist vision of the federal government. Certain provinces are used to justify the use of strong-arm tactics against other provinces. The federal government signs agreements with some provinces, Alberta and Manitoba in this case, indicates that negotiations are under way with five more provinces and, all of a sudden, introduces a bill.

The wall-to-wall theory is used. The Canada-wide approach is made to apply. National standards are implemented without any regard for what is already being done in some provinces or territories. The federal bulldozer starts rolling before discussions with the provinces are completed. That is precisely the attitude provinces reject and the public no longer accepts.

(1250)

Unfortunately, ever since they came to office the Liberals have done nothing but centralize and encroach upon provincial jurisdiction. The Liberals still believe in a Canada that is the same from one end to the other, wrapped in the same red tapestry made from a book of the same colour on which the members opposite have fed abundantly during the last electoral campaign. However, as time passes, colour and direction are changing.

Take for example the last green, mauve and grey books that this government made public with great pomp. Their projects and propositions once more target ordinary Canadians and show this government's determination to encroach upon provincial jurisdiction.

This bill on environmental assessment is no exception to the rule of this overbearing and totalitarian federalism, as the former Liberal Environment Minister of Quebec, Mr. Pierre Paradis, called it. Coming from a convinced and orthodox federalist, from the same party as hon. members opposite, that says it all. May I remind you that Mr. Paradis came before the Senate to try to stop the passing of the bill introduced by then minister Charest, implementing the federal environmental assessment process. The minister said that Bill C-13 was trespassing dangerously on Quebec's preserves.

He also said that this bill would allow the federal government to encroach upon a provincial jurisdiction. He believed Ottawa could, from then on, intervene any time it wished to assess a Quebec project that could have an environmental impact.

This true federalist said that Bill C-13 would allow the use of every available lever to submit as many projects as possible to the federal assessment process and even to control all aspects of assessments done by another jurisdiction. He also said that the federal process would constantly interfere with Quebec procedure.

The person who said those things in 1992 was not a member of the P.Q. or the Bloc, not a separatist. He was a Grit, a Liberal, a federalist, just like the Minister of the Environment and the government.

On November 22, 1991, Mr. Paradis wrote to his old friend in Ottawa, minister Charest, the present member for Sherbrooke. He wrote: "Bill C-13, in its present form, far from clarifying the situation, allows for a useless encroachment of the federal assessment process on decisions which fall exclusively under Quebec's jurisdiction, and this can only lead to a wasteful duplication of assessment processes and, inevitably, to numerous conflicts".

The federalist Quebec minister said he wished that Ottawa would recognize and respect the process used by the provinces to assess environmental impacts, something clearly under their jurisdiction.

It was not a P.Q. member who said that, that was not an evil separatist, it was a federalist who wanted the federal government to stay in Ottawa and look after its own affairs.

In another letter addressed to another minister of the Conservative government of the time—we should probably say of the era, since this party has virtually disappeared from the map—Minister Paradis wrote on December 17, 1990: "—the bill raises important constitutional questions and many implementation problems". He was saying clearly that the federal government had no business saying it had to protect the environment when trying to regulate areas of exclusive provincial jurisdiction.

This legislation would mean that all Quebec projects would be submitted to a federal environmental assessment. Minister Paradis was concerned about wasteful and costly duplication and delays, since the federal process would be added on to the Quebec process.

Finally, in the March 17, 1994 issue of *Le Journal de Montréal*, federalist Quebec minister Pierre Paradis was quoted as saying on the question of environmental assessments: "We have to harmonize the two legislations in order to have a single window, predominantly under Quebec control, for environmental assessment". And he added: "Quebec maintains that its jurisdiction must be protected and that it should be in charge".

(1255)

The minister was here on March 17, 1994. How could she ignore a Quebec federalist minister's request?

A lawyer, Michel Yergeau, was of the same opinion when he wrote the following in the April 1, 1992 issue of the daily *Le Devoir*: "It is not because Ottawa has taken over a matter which demands a global approach and knows no boundaries that it can altogether disregard the Constitution. With Bill C-13, Ottawa

uses its authority and unilaterally settles matters in its favour, of course”.

He then adds: “To justify such abruptness, Ottawa puts forward the pressing need to protect the environment in its areas of jurisdiction. The net result of this unilateral exercise is not and cannot be good. It must be reviewed and refined”. I repeat: “It must be reviewed and refined”.

The way things are at the present time, C-13 is just plain raw material the courts will have to refine on a case by case basis, which can only create a lot of resentment. In the long run, the whole exercise will be more time-consuming than sitting at the bargaining table to settle this issue once and for all. This is a real timebomb the federal government has planted in the Canadian legislation. This is also a further threat to the constitutional reconciliation the government yearns for. It is not even good for the environment.

This is a rather serious statement on the part of an environmental lawyer. It seems to me that the minister should take heed.

Mr. Yergeau says that Ottawa ignores the Constitution. He talks about the abruptness of the federal government. He thinks Ottawa is setting a time bomb in the Canadian legislation. The members opposite who believe in federalism should be very concerned by these statements. They should at least wonder about the impact their actions could have on the system they so implicitly believe in. It is totally illogical to in such a manner as to destroy a federal system you trust so much.

Of course, we in the Bloc feel that this suits our purpose. If you go on like this, there will come a time in 1995 when Quebecers will tell you: We see what you are after and you can just go back to Ottawa. From now on, we will do our own thing. This is just perfect. Carry on like you have been doing. All that is grist to our mill.

In an article published in *Le Devoir* on March 21, 1992, Lise Bissonnette said that the passage of the Act to establish a federal environmental assessment process was a kind of takeover. She indicated that Bill C-13 added to the Quebec-Canada problem that has yet to be solved, since it looks a lot like the Constitutional issue that it exacerbates while giving a lesson to Quebec. All the elements are there.

Lise Bissonnette compared Bill C-13 to an enormous machine that can assess absolutely everything, including the areas most obviously under provincial jurisdiction. She also said that the terms and conditions of future federal-provincial agreements would ensure that the provincial process is subject to the federal process, even though Ottawa only had a small say in this area.

More far-sighted, Ms. Bissonnette declared that Ottawa was giving itself the power to jeopardize Quebec's whole energy policy and thus its choices for economic development.

### *Routine Proceedings*

Finally, she concluded her article by saying that Ottawa, by giving itself such wide, preponderant power that could take many shapes and forms, would control not only the quality of life but also a large part of economic development.

Today, the minister and the federal government are faced with the clear consensus in Quebec against the CEAA. The Quebec Liberal Party, the Parti Québécois and the Bloc Québécois all expressed their strong opposition to this Act. But no matter what we do or say, the federal government will go ahead. Should we take comfort in realizing that such lack of understanding and respect leads to separation? As it did so many times in the past, the federal government leaves Quebec no choice. It is a take it or leave it situation. Quebecers will have to choose soon. That is what some people involved or interested in this issue said at the time.

(1300)

Mr. Speaker, I know that I must stop here. Will I be allowed to continue later?

**The Speaker:** My dear colleague, yes, according to the Clerk, it seems that you have a few minutes left. I would also ask you to always address the Chair, not the members opposite.

It being one o'clock, pursuant to the order made earlier today with unanimous consent, the House will now proceed to Statements by Ministers.

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## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[*Translation*]

### ETHICS

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this government has set high standards of integrity and probity for itself. I have made integrity a number one priority personally.

I have said it before, and I will say it again: Setting such standards for the holders of public office is essential in renewing and maintaining the faith of Canadians in their public institutions.

This is the case in particular of ministers who must remain above reproach at all times and in all of their activities, whether it be as ministers, members of Parliament or private citizens. That is the burden of public office, and one that we all gladly accept to bear.

Last week, the actions of the Minister of Heritage were discussed in this House. Legitimate concerns were raised which we all share.



*Routine Proceedings*

Everyone understands the rule that no one is to call judges concerning cases they have under consideration. This applies to everyone—ministers, MPs and ordinary citizens.

The rule concerning relations with the judiciary is unequivocal and has been in force for over 10 years. No minister may communicate with members of the judiciary concerning any matter which they have before them in their judicial capacities, except through the Minister of Justice or through duly authorized officials of, or counsel acting for, that minister.

[*English*]

But the situation is not as clear with administrative tribunals. The guidance we gave ministers in this area was that on those rare occasions when any minister might wish to communicate with members of the quasi-judicial bodies concerning any matter which they have before them in their judicial capacities, they should only do so through the duly authorized officials.

In addition to considering quasi-judicial matters, these bodies may consider a whole range of administrative, regulatory and policy matters.

Even in relation to quasi-judicial matters before them, administrative tribunals defer from the courts. As part of the decision making process, some tribunals welcome representations from ordinary citizens and members of Parliament. These representations are put on the public record.

When a representation is sent to the CRTC it is a public document. For example from September 1993 to October 1994 the CRTC held 18 public hearings. It received 15,422 letters in support of licence applicants. Seventy-two were from members of Parliament, from all parties in this House. Representations were made by many Liberal members, including ministers, members from the Bloc Québécois, the Reform Party, the NDP, the Conservatives, and one independent.

(1305)

Clearly we are not confronted with anything like calling a judge. What we are dealing with is the dilemma of ministers who also must fulfil their duties as members of Parliament who were elected to represent their constituents. That makes this whole area of relationships with administrative tribunals much more complex than with the courts.

I have learned a lesson too. This government has done a lot to give our ministers clear guidelines to do their jobs and avoid conflict of interest, including the historic ethics package we introduced in June. But now it is plain to me that the guidelines for dealing with administrative tribunals were not clear or complete enough.

[*Translation*]

Last Thursday, after Question Period, I gave instructions that all ministers and secretaries of State review their files and the

operation of their offices to establish whether there existed any other cases like that of the Minister of Heritage, not only with respect to the CRTC but also with respect to other administrative tribunals.

We have found several cases of a similar nature:

The Minister of Citizenship and immigration, the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, the Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs and the Secretary of State for Latin America and Africa have each written, over the last year, to the CRTC in support of license applicants. The Minister of Fisheries and Oceans has also written on behalf of his constituents to a number of administrative agencies, including the Pensions Plan Review Tribunal and a board of referees concerning unemployment insurance benefits, as he has always done during his long career as member of this House.

This is what we know so far. There may be others. But whether there are five or a hundred, the issue is the same.

[*English*]

As Prime Minister I am dealing with ministers who did not act for personal gain, who did not act for partisan purposes. In each case they acted in good faith for their constituents. Let us put what they did into perspective. There is no scandal here, no violation of integrity, and no breach of public trust.

How did this happen? I believe it is because we have not been clear in distinguishing between the role of a cabinet minister and members of Parliament in our guidelines when it comes to dealing with administrative tribunals. The government bears responsibility for that, and so do I.

I promised Canadians we would provide an honest government and we have. I promised them we would provide an open and accountable government and we have. But I did not, and never could promise an infallible government.

I said before that this government will make mistakes, but they will be honest mistakes and we will always move to correct them. That is what we are doing today.

On Friday I gave instructions for more complete guidelines to be developed in consultation with the ethics counsellor to ensure that ministers deal with administrative tribunals in an appropriate manner. This morning I wrote to each minister and secretary of state instructing them that until the new guidelines were in place all dealings with administrative tribunals must be done through the ethics counsellor, Mr. Wilson.

[*Translation*]

At Cabinet tomorrow, I will be reviewing the whole issue with ministers. No one wants to disenfranchise the constituents of a minister.

*Routine Proceedings*

(1310)

For example, on Saturday morning, I spent three hours in my riding of Saint-Maurice receiving my constituents. I even received some constituents from an opposition riding, Trois-Rivières. The Chamber of Commerce and mayor of Trois-Rivières came to see me. It is not even in my riding, but I thought that as minister responsible for the region, I would not punish the mayor who wanted to see me and just tell him to go and see his Bloc Québécois member; because he wanted to see me, I received him.

Was I wrong? Was I right? I think that it is part of my duty to receive, as much as possible, people who want to see me. On the other hand, no one wants ministers to unduly influence administrative agencies. The challenge is to strike the right balance in imposing constraints on a minister that are not imposed on an ordinary member of Parliament.

Staff for ministers and secretaries of state will also be briefed. Finally, I believe this is a matter of legitimate debate and I undertake to hold a debate in the House of Commons before these guidelines are finalized. All members of this House have a responsibility to put my ministers—and me personally—under the closest possible scrutiny. We welcome that scrutiny, but that does not mean turning legitimate concerns into matters of scandal where none exists.

*[English]*

All my career I have believed that honesty is the best policy, that a government and a Prime Minister must level with Canadians, tell them the truth, and treat them with the respect and intelligence they deserve. That is what I am doing here today. I am proud of this government's record of honesty and integrity. We have worked hard to earn it. But honesty and integrity also mean facing up to moments like this. That is the responsibility that this government and I will never betray.

One of the values of our parliamentary system and our administrative system that is very important to me is that all cabinet ministers, including the Prime Minister, must first be elected in a riding where he or she is seeking the support and confidence of thousands of people like any other member of Parliament. After that he or she becomes the Prime Minister or is called to serve in the cabinet. The first duty of all of us is to make sure that the people who have voted for us are duly represented in this House of Commons and that their interests are defended. It is difficult sometimes.

For example when I was member for Beauséjour and Leader of the Opposition, a group decided to close a radio station. A representation was made before me. Some local people said: "We want to keep a radio station in operation in Shawinigan. Will you support us to get a licence if it is closed?". It was not in

my riding but I knew these people. They knew there was interest in keeping a radio station operating in Shawinigan and I told them I would support them. They were in the business and wanted to buy the assets and operate it.

(1315)

Fortunately somebody else bought the station and I did not have to support them. However, the local citizens of my riding wanted to keep a radio station in operation. They thought a person like me who was still a member of Parliament could help them to maintain a link of communication for the local citizens through a radio station. That is the type of thing and that is done in public.

A letter that a member of Parliament or a minister writes to the CRTC is not a private letter. It is not a confidential letter. All these letters are public documentation in a public trial that everybody can look at, just like the 14,000 people who wrote in support of applications.

When I asked my ministers—there may be a couple of others, I do not know who wrote letters like that in support of applications—I found that one of them, the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, wrote in support of francophones in his riding who want to make sure that all the news programs for French news are accessible to the francophones of his riding.

Apparently he wrote too late, but the reality is that he was representing the interests of a little group of francophones isolated in the southwest corner of Newfoundland who wanted to communicate with people who speak French, the other official language of Canada, at home as completely as possible.

I am happy to report what I have been able to gather over the weekend to clarify the situation. From here on, while we are developing the proper guidelines, ministers will have to keep in mind all the time that we are members of Parliament and we are at the same time ministers and what are due or undue public interventions such as those I have mentioned.

I think it was in response to requests by their constituents in open fashion in open files. That is why I did not ask anybody to do anything. However, we will give proper guidelines after I hope a debate in this House of Commons so that the members of Parliament can tell us how to resolve this obligation to serve the nation as a minister and to serve the people who have voted for these ministers before they were called upon to serve in the cabinet.

*[Translation]*

With leave of the House, I would like to table a copy of the letters that ministers have written to the CRTC. These are public letters whose release in no way violates people's right to privacy. I would like to table these letters immediately.

*Routine Proceedings*

**Hon. Lucien Bouchard (Leader of the Opposition, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister has just reiterated his commitment to integrity and ethics in government.

We salute these noble remarks, which he has repeated on many occasions, notably during his assessment of his government's performance in the past year. But I would daresay that last week, the Prime Minister, who was preparing for situations in which he would have to rigorously demonstrate his commitment to ethics, faced for the first time—after giving many speeches and making numerous commitments to uphold public integrity; and we understand how difficult it must have been for him—a situation in which he had to make a decision and translate talk into action.

(1320)

With all due respect, I submit that for an honest leader of the government like the Prime Minister—which is something I recognize and congratulate him for; I think having an honest leader of the government is encouraging to all of us and important to all citizens—

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

**Mr. Bouchard:**—it was an opportunity for the Prime Minister to go beyond his role as party leader and fully assume his primary responsibilities as leader of the government, namely being a vigilant and ruthless—repeat, ruthless—guardian of ethical standards. He had an opportunity to make an example, to ensure the continuity of ethical standards that have always been followed by Canadian government leaders by asking his minister to resign. I understand how difficult it must be. I understand how difficult it must be, especially when there is a personal relationship—as often happens within political parties—between individuals who work together for a while in the public interest. But one must sometimes look beyond personal relationships with fellow party members when fundamental values are at stake. I say that the Prime Minister—I say it with as much restraint as I can—failed his first test in honouring his commitment to integrity.

Let us have a quick look at the facts. On March 15, the Minister of Heritage wrote the Chairman of the CRTC to, I say, support a licence application. My claim is strengthened by the fact that the addressee himself wrote that he saw this letter, this action, as a letter of support. This is in the public file. On March 29, a letter thanking the minister for his support was put in the file. It was perfectly normal to think that the letter was one of support, since the minister was requesting that due consideration be given to the application, asking the CRTC to keep him abreast of any developments in the matter. Indeed, the minister, who is the CRTC's boss, asked to be kept informed about an application in which he had such an interest that he wrote a letter about it. Moreover, the minister offered, in writing, to provide any additional information the CRTC might have required.

It took six months for the Minister of Canadian Heritage to feel somewhat remorseful, decide to apologize and write to the CRTC to say that the March letter was not intended to convey support to the application. This is what the minister did. A minister's actions are judged by the Prime Minister. One of the duties of the Prime Minister is to ensure that ministers behave properly and comply with his own code of ethics and principles of integrity.

The Prime Minister was, to say the least, slow to react, since he found out on October 1 what happened but did nothing for a whole month. He waited until the whole issue became public and there is every reason to believe that we would never have known about this violation of basic rules of ethics for ministers if the letter had not been made public. The Prime Minister waited until the whole thing became public to suddenly start saying that this was an unacceptable mistake. It was too little too late on the Prime Minister's part.

What is he doing now? Today, the Prime Minister is drawing a fine line between judicial and administrative tribunals. The Prime Minister is a lawyer. He has always been in public life and he knows public law. He is perfectly aware that a large number of decisions made by the CRTC fall under the jurisdiction of ordinary courts of law. What makes a tribunal a tribunal is that it makes decisions on rights, on their delegation and creation, on disputes, and on complaints or penal complaints and charges.

(1325)

The CRTC does more than determine policy. It acts as a judicial tribunal when applying the law. It makes decisions based on civil, financial and public law that directly affect Canadians, since these decisions concern the management of all aspects of broadcasting and telecommunications. It is also empowered to deal with complaints.

In this respect, the CRTC is subject to the same arm's length rules as judicial tribunals, and I would say even more so, because these quasi-judicial bodies have become so important that very often, the decisions they make are more important than the judgments of a civil court. For instance, the CRTC has the authority to decide whether or not a company will go bankrupt and whether a broadcasting or telephone monopoly will be awarded to one company rather than another. We all know that the financial stakes may be considerable, and citizens are directly affected by the implications, so these decisions are crucial.

One can hardly stand up in this House especially when as Leader of the Government, one is thoroughly familiar with the situation, and claim that an administrative tribunal is less important than a judicial tribunal and that the strictly arm's length relationship that must exist to ensure the independence of judicial tribunals does not necessarily apply to tribunals like the CRTC. The distinction does not hold water.

*Routine Proceedings*

Second, the Prime Minister's attitude today is rather surprising. Here we have the holder of the highest office in our parliamentary democracy, who already made an extremely controversial decision not to accept the minister's resignation, although most newspapers who carried editorials on this issue asked for the minister's resignation and criticized the Prime Minister for not demanding that resignation, and now, today or yesterday, I am not sure which, but some day we may find out, the Prime Minister hears there were four other cases in addition to this one.

And today, he comes before us, neither repentant nor deeply apologetic, and refers to the fact that four other ministers were involved as an extenuating circumstance, as though there were safety in numbers.

Third, we have the Prime Minister making this incredible distinction, while at the same time muddying the waters with respect to the duties of members and ministers. I submit that the Prime Minister did Canadian democracy and the public perception of Canada's democratic institutions a great disservice when he appeared to erase the fine line between the duties of members and ministers.

The Prime Minister knows perfectly well that this entire debate is about the fundamental principle of the separation of powers. Our democratic institutions are all founded on the separation of powers: the legislative power, the judicial power and the executive power. The walls that separate these powers from one another are absolutely solid and impenetrable, because democracy requires us to dilute power and thus prevent the concentration of all these powers in one person, which is how dictatorships are born.

A strict division of powers is essential to the development of democracy, respect of civil rights and operation of public liberties. A minister cannot encroach on the judiciary. Why? Why is the rule so strict? Why is it that we do not have to prove dishonesty? Why is it that we do not have to prove corruption? How come the simple fact of over-stepping this boundary carries a sanction? Why? Because the principle to be protected is absolute, it is the principle of the judiciary's independence.

Democracy rests, first and foremost, on the rule of law. We all know that when the state violates the rights of an individual, when two individuals disagree, instead of resorting to violence or some other manifestation unacceptable in a democracy, we go before a wiseperson, someone totally independent, appointed for life, who will render a decision we can trust. I think that this country should pay tribute to the quality of its tribunals.

All governments try their best to make sure they only appoint to the bench people with an impeccable reputation, competent and honest. This is a rule which, up to now, has been observed by

all parties. This is vital, because the day the judiciary is compromised, democracy as we know it will be over, we will not be able to resolve anything in a proper manner. Therefore, we have to respect judicial powers and we have to recognize the necessity of a separation of powers.

When the Prime Minister tries to pretend that there is no difference between the job of an MP and the job of a minister, he confuses two other powers, he crosses in an unacceptable manner the line separating the executive and legislative branches.

(1330)

When a MP is chosen to be a minister, he enters a new phase, crosses the line between the executive and the legislative and is asked to behave with great rigour so as to respect the separation between both duties, both categories.

If a member is unable to understand that the fact of becoming a minister adds to his duties the obligation of being rigorous and respectful of these fundamental rules, he should not be a minister, he does not have the skills to be one, and should either resign or be dismissed.

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

**Mr. Bouchard:** All these lame attempts at comparing him with an opposition member, even a government member who would intercede with an administrative tribunal on his constituents' behalf, do not wash because the Leader of the Opposition does not belong to the executive. The Leader of the Opposition is confined to legislative work and to representing his constituents. The Prime Minister knows full well that he twisted the facts, distorted these institutions when he confused both.

Do we really need new rules? Do we need to tell you that a minister who has broken the aforementioned rules must resign? There are many precedents, and in a British judicial system such as ours, precedents make the rule.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs knows full well that he cannot contact judicial and quasi-judicial tribunals. He did it once and had to resign. The member for Sherbrooke knows it too, he learned it at his expense.

**The Speaker:** Order, please. The right hon. Prime Minister.

**Mr. Chrétien (Saint-Maurice):** Mr. Speaker, he should stop lying to the House.

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

**The Speaker:** Order. As you know, dear colleagues, it is unacceptable in this House to ascribe one member's motives to another member. It is certainly unacceptable to accuse a member of lying.

I would therefore ask, with all due respect, the Prime Minister to withdraw his comments.

*Routine Proceedings*

**Mr. Chrétien (Saint-Maurice):** Mr. Speaker, what I meant is that he is confusing the two. Judicial is not the same as quasi-judicial. I clearly explained the difference between the two.

[*English*]

**The Speaker:** I am sure we want to hear both sides. Members of Parliament will have the chance to express themselves in the House. I would, with all respect to the Prime Minister, ask him to withdraw those words where he said that the Leader of the Opposition lied.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Chrétien (Saint-Maurice):** I just wanted to set the record straight, Mr. Speaker. If I said the word “lie”—

**Some hon. members:** Withdraw those words!

**Mr. Chrétien (Saint-Maurice):** I am pleased to withdraw those words. I say to the Leader of the Opposition that he should stick to the text; there is a difference between judicial—

**The Speaker:** Dear colleagues, at this time, the Leader of the Opposition has the floor.

[*English*]

I return to the Leader of the Opposition to take up where he left off. We have heard a withdrawal of the words which were in question. They are categorical. I accept them as the Chair and I return to the Leader of the Opposition.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Bouchard:** Mr. Speaker, I told the Prime Minister that there was no distinction between judicial and quasi-judicial bodies to the extent that they decide on rights. These are rights which were decided.

The heritage minister and the four other ministers who broke the rules all interfered with licence applications which the CRTC decides in order to create civil rights. In so doing, it is exactly the same as a court of law.

I continue and I conclude, because I have a time limit.

(1335)

What we learned this morning is that despite all these declarations of respect for integrity, this cabinet also hid at least four other cases of violations of fundamental rules. I demand that these be followed up. I demand that we go beyond a simple ministerial statement which attempts to smooth things over. There must at least be an investigation by the ethics counsellor.

He should check all the files, make the rounds, meet the ministers who are at fault and the other ministers, because we are told that there might be more. The Prime Minister told us that there might be up to 100 cases. That is more cases than Cabinet ministers. So the ethics counsellor must investigate.

Secondly, the ethics counsellor should table in this House all the documents that he finds and be summoned before an appropriate parliamentary committee for a fundamental discussion, with witnesses, of an issue that affects the integrity not only of the government but of Canada's democratic institutions.

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

[*English*]

**Mr. Ken Epp (Elk Island, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, at the outset I would like to say that I am very honoured and privileged to respond to the statement of the Prime Minister.

The way things work around here, different parties have a turn at being in government. We have had the Conservatives and Liberals over and over. I have to admit that sometimes when I look across I am overwhelmed at the magnitude of the responsibility ministers and the Prime Minister have. I sometimes wonder what we will be like when we get there.

We received a copy of the Prime Minister's statement only in an official language which does not happen to be my own. Except for a few paragraphs, most of my speech is going to be extemporaneous since I spent most of the time available to me getting it translated into the language I could understand. I hope you will bear with me, Mr. Speaker, if some of the points I make and develop are perhaps not as well developed as we are accustomed to on this side of the House.

The Prime Minister has spoken of the necessity for integrity, honesty and openness. He speaks of that not only today but has done so on a number of other occasions. I was never a member of a political party before I was elected here. One thing that drew me to the party to which I belong, the Reform Party, was that it stressed very strongly the concepts of integrity and honesty. I assure the House and the Prime Minister that his continually talking about integrity and honesty strikes a chord with the Canadian people because they want it and I want it.

The question here is not whether we want it. In the notes that I took I see his speech included talking about integrity and honesty. That is really not the debate. We already agree on that. However, the question is how to do it.

Without being disrespectful, what we have heard today is a longer answer to a question in Question Period without the nasty interruption of another question. We heard an explanation, trying to put oil on the waters and smooth them out. We are seeing massive damage control.

(1340)

I would like to take a few minutes to get down to the basics of this issue. The question before us was triggered by a particular incident that has occupied the House for the last week. First we need to ask ourselves if we would be here debating this and would we be doing it in this way if it were not for this incident? Would the government be as eager to push forward this agenda if it had not been driven to it? Perhaps this is reactionary but we

*Routine Proceedings*

need to get on with it. We need to make sure there is integrity in government.

We need to back up one step. One of the reasons the Canadian people and the opposition so strenuously object to what has happened is back one step further. It concerns the way government works.

We all recognize that in our system of government all of us as members of Parliament are essentially powerless to influence true decision making. On a number of occasions we have put motions which have made eminent good sense to anyone who stops to think about them. Yet to a person, all of the members in the government have voted the way their leadership and their party, including their ministers, have directed on an issue. I accept that as fact. That is what has been happening. I can observe that. I have come to that conclusion.

In the perception of the Canadian people, ministers are very powerful. Indeed they are. That is why one needs to object when a minister gives even the inkling that he is exercising that excessive power in order to influence matters on behalf of his constituents, a role that is not available to ordinary MPs in opposition or in government.

We need to ask the government what has happened here. The Prime Minister has correctly stated that just because one is a member of the cabinet one should not be disenfranchised as a member of Parliament. I agree with that principle. The cabinet minister, as a member of Parliament, must be able to represent his constituents in legitimate matters. It is the variation that is at question here.

This particular incident occurred when a minister made a statement on ministerial letterhead and because he is the minister overseeing that area it can properly be viewed as being undue influence.

The ethics code does not permit that. I was able to pull this out quickly from one of my files. I quote from the ethics package: "Public office holders shall act with honesty and uphold the highest ethical standards so that public confidence and trust in the integrity, objectivity and impartiality of government are conserved and enhanced".

That principle is violated when several people are contending for a licence and one has behind him the power of a ministerial letter and the other one has an ordinary MP representing him. Because it is in the same department I believe this is a violation of the principle and ought to result in more than just an apology and "let us try to do better". We need to go beyond that.

I also want to quote from the same document with respect to preferential treatment: "Public office holders shall not step out of their official roles to assist private entities or persons in their dealings with the government where this would result in prefer-

ential treatment to any person". In this case it is evident that this has happened. It is wrong and it needs to be corrected.

We also have the question of the ethics counsellor.

(1345)

I hope the Prime Minister was honest, and I have no reason to question it, when he said: "We want to have not only the appearance of more integrity, but we actually want more integrity whether it is in appearance or not". I have no reason to doubt the authenticity of the minister's motivation there. I am in agreement with it.

I will not relate all of the details of what has been going on in the past few days, but when we have an ethics counsellor who is being consulted only in retrospect after decisions are made and then, so it appears, only to help put oil on the waters, that casts great doubt on the whole procedure. I think it is a violation of the principle to have an ethics counsellor be responsible to, take his directions from and answerable to the Prime Minister only.

I do agree that the Prime Minister needs all of the assistance he can get. I believe he needs to have counsellors in the area of ethics and certainly in the areas of operating this government. He needs all the help he can get but could we perhaps in addition have an ethics counsellor with the same order of independence and accountability to Parliament as, say, the Auditor General has in financial matters?

I think it would be eminently fair, very helpful to the Canadian people and would certainly help all of us in this place as members of Parliament to understand and believe the government if there were an independent inquiry, not pushed around by political interests but one which would be truly independent and respond openly and honestly with the assessment of what has happened, a recommendation of what should be done now in order to solve this situation, what we need to do, what rules we need to change, what legislation we need to bring in and what people we need in order to make it work better and more correctly.

I conclude by simply saying that this is a very, very unfortunate blight on this Parliament. It is an area where doubt is and has been cast on the government. We can only say that it is important for us as soon as possible, as cleanly as possible and as openly as possible to bring this to a conclusion and allow the minister to resign. Let us get this done the way it ought to be done and produce in the minds of people a genuine trust in the government.

*Government Orders***GOVERNMENT ORDERS**

[Translation]

**CANADIAN ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT ACT**

The House resumed consideration of the motion.

**Mrs. Monique Guay (Laurentides, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I will pick up from where I left off.

This is what some people who were involved and interested in the issue said at the time. However, all these representations, warnings and concerns proved to be of little help, since the current Minister of the Environment announced that legislation on October 6.

The amendments which are proposed by the minister and included in Bill C-56 do no change anything to the centralizing objectives of the federal government. The regulations made under old Bill C-13 are nothing to reassure those who want to invest in Quebec. Except for the construction of houses for non-migratory birds or field shelters, an almost endless number of projects could trigger a federal environmental assessment. The Minister of the Environment knows full well that the current Leader of the Opposition is not the one who drafted these regulations.

(1350)

It is her government that decided to take control over Quebec's economic development by subjecting to a federal assessment projects of vital importance for our province, including mining development as well as the expansion of power plants and hydroelectric projects. The strategy used by the minister to that end is both very simple and very predictable.

The minister makes arrangements with a number of provinces to take control of fields where those provinces have not exercised their jurisdiction. She then signs an agreement with those provinces and there you have it: that agreement becomes just as valid for Quebec as it is for the other provinces. This is the automatic response of this centralizing government.

And the Liberals behave that way in other sectors as well. Since they took office, they have constantly introduced projects aimed at giving the federal more control over the provinces. The big federal machine is systematically trying to gain more control in every sector, in spite of its own problems and its serious functional and political deficiencies.

Members sitting on the other side are pleased. They keep singing each other's praises, they keep chanting "Long live the federal government; long live our strong centralizing government; long live the big federal machine". However, the other side of the coin is very depressing and raises serious concerns among people. And people are right to be worried. The federal government is like a steamroller levelling everything and jeop-

ardizing vital entitlements. People fought to gain these rights and now they have to fight again to preserve them.

In fact, with their big boss who speaks of dignity and pride, their bread and butter supplier, the Liberals are driving a huge steamroller over the less affluent and middle-income taxpayers.

The provinces are also getting crushed under this huge steamroller. Naturally, the rich, the large corporations, the financiers, all those who are for centralizing to excess find pleasure in watching the steamroller do its job. It is a real shame, Mr. Speaker.

Small is beautiful and people first are concepts unknown to the people opposite. Yet, on the evening of October 25, 1993, these same people had promised us the moon. But getting back to the subject, let me quote them.

When they were in opposition, the Liberals opposite used to speak against the bill on the federal environmental assessment legislation. This will illustrate the striking transformation elected members undergo when they move across the way. It is tragic-comic.

Bach in those days, the present Liberal member for Winnipeg North Centre was saying: "We must ensure that the powers put in place are explicit enough to make it possible to develop environmental standards that can withstand provincial pressure. The government is not protecting Canadians, with this bill at least, against the aims of the provincial and federal governments. The people have been let down in so many ways already that, if we do it again, Parliament will score more poorly than ever".

That is what he thought of this bill passed by his government. It was no good then, but now it is OK.

The Liberal member for Eglinton—Lawrence, who still sits in this House, said on October 22, 1990, and I quote: "It is, in fact, legislation without teeth". [—]The key word was "redraft" and not make amendments that are going to provide acceptable frills to this bill but to alter completely the whole dimension of this bill. [—]One of those items refers to the fact that the compliance component of the bill certainly is very lacking. There is absolute indifference to the concept of making various jurisdictions of government comply, particularly when they set up their own review mechanisms".

Our colleague from Egmont, Prince Edward Island, was saying: "Bill C-78 does not meet the legislative requirements relating to environmental protection. Considering how important and urgently required this legislation is, we cannot be satisfied with such an ill-defined and toothless bill. This bill does not meet the expectations of Canadians nor those of the government's own environment and economy committee". It is so seriously flawed that it should be withdrawn or redrafted. But I am sure he will vote for this bill.

The Liberal member for Cape Breton Highlands—Canso said: “In addition, I have many concerns about the philosophy behind the bill and about the bill’s effectiveness”. As I listen to this debate, I am convinced the government should go back to the drawing board before it asks us to pass this bill. Many basic aspects of this measure should be rethought, and quite frankly, I must say the bill is far from perfect.

(1355)

The Liberal member for Nepean went even further when she said: “Unfortunately, the weakness of the legislation before us makes for a sceptical public and questions the motives of us as legislators and the seriousness of the government’s intent in enacting this resolution”.

The current Secretary of State and Liberal member for Northumberland said, in referring to Bill C-78, and I quote: “Mr. Mulroney’s government’s latest environmental legislation is fundamentally flawed. Canada will return to the dark ages of environmental law if Bill C-78 passes in its present form”.

The present Minister of Industry said in the House: “The heritage of Canadians is too important to be left only to the provinces. I do not see even a wish to acknowledge that it has the power to intervene in development projects which are going to be environmentally harmful. This bill is an inadequate response in the context of many events occurring in Canada”.

One of his cabinet colleagues, the Minister of social program cuts, mentioned that his Liberal colleagues had been devastating in their criticism of the flaws of this bill. He said this measure would do no good at all. He hoped that someday, we would have a government that would be able to negotiate a new agreement, with responsibility shared by federal and provincial authorities. “I think that our own creative juices should be employed for finding out how we can share jurisdiction for environmental assessment”, said the present minister. It is rather comical that at the time, this minister talked about sharing responsibility, when we consider the negative response from the provinces to his social security reform.

Finally, the first prize goes to our beloved Minister of Finance, and I will give you a few samples of what he said. “Bill C-78 is so flawed that it will weaken existing standards for environmental assessment. The bill is lacking in all respects.”

“So we have a bill that died on the Order Paper and which the government, with its supreme arrogance and total lack of logic, now wants to resurrect, although the measure was unanimously rejected by Canadians. As unrealistic governments go, this one takes the cake. And if there is one government proving it, it surely is the present one with its attitude towards Bill C-78. First, this bill is based on a completely false assumption. But the government wants to hold fast to a vision developed in the

1850s and to continue to believe we can produce goods without worrying about waste and the frittering away of our resources, as if it had no importance whatsoever”.

“Both the business representatives and the environmentalists heard in committee think this bill is unacceptable”. “When we come to office in two years, I can assure you that no member will ask himself if the water he drinks is harmless. This bill will cause more problems than it will solve. It should go back to the drawing board.”

We should not be astonished by the radical turnabouts of the Minister of Finance. He is the wind vane of the Liberals.

That is what some government members were saying when they were on this side of the House. Should we believe they were all victims of the same phenomenon and all have to get a feeling of the wind, like the Minister of Finance, before making up their minds?

The most serious aspect of this sudden change of mind on the part of the Liberals is that the Minister of Environment now praises this bill and congratulates our leader for having initiated it in 1990. She says he is the father of the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act and pats him on the back every opportunity she gets whereas, at the time, the Liberals were certainly not patting him on the back, quite the contrary. They were strongly against this bill, as their statements on the subject show. That is typical of the Liberals. They are real weathercocks. No, worse than that, they are opportunists.

As far as this Bill C-56 is concerned, the federal minister wants to make sure that, as much as possible, only one environmental assessment will be made for each project. Of course, and again this is easy to anticipate, she will fall back on our leader to justify her bill, but we all know that the bill tabled by our leader in 1990 has been extensively amended and that—

[English]

**The Speaker:** It being 2 p.m., pursuant to Standing Order 30(5) the House will now proceed to Statements by Members pursuant to Standing Order 31.

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## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[English]

### UNITED NATIONS

**Mr. Gar Knutson (Elgin—Norfolk, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, 50 years ago last week the United Nations was formed. While there have been many changes to the form of the UN its basic goal has remained the same.



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Together nations of goodwill can offer assistance and help in the peaceful resolution of conflicts. Peacekeeping is a Canadian invention and I am ever so proud to have eight members of the Elgin Regiment located in my riding going to war torn Bosnia to assist the civilians who are not war lords nor combatants but simple civilians caught in a crossfire.

Canada working through the UN has a long and distinguished history. The United Nations, while desperately needing rejuvenation, remains the world's best hope for conflict resolution.

I wish the young men from my riding who have chosen to wear the blue beret all of God's protection as they carry out this noble task.

\* \* \*

[*Translation*]

#### HIS EMINENCE JEAN-CLAUDE CARDINAL TURCOTTE

**Mr. Michel Daviault (Ahuntsic, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, it is an honour for the entire Catholic community of Quebec to learn today that the archbishop of Montreal, the Most Reverend Jean-Claude Turcotte, was named cardinal.

Monsignor Turcotte, third cardinal from Montreal in Quebec's history, is joining the Sacred College of cardinals responsible for electing a new pope when the Holy Father dies. Aged 58, Monsignor Turcotte will be able to influence the direction of the Church in Montreal and Quebec for many years to come.

The Bloc Québécois wishes to congratulate warmly His Eminence Cardinal Turcotte. He will no doubt manage to convey to the higher levels of the Church's hierarchy the concerns and values of openness, mutual help and tolerance of Quebec society. Monsignor Turcotte's dedication to the poorest of the poor is widely recognized.

\* \* \*

[*English*]

#### HEALTH

**Mr. Jay Hill (Prince George—Peace River, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker since 1986 thousands of cattle in Great Britain have contracted what is commonly known as mad cow disease.

Mad cow disease has an incubation period of up to eight years and can be detected only in its advanced stages. There is no evidence that it can be spread by animal to animal contact, but to be safe Agriculture Canada started banning the importation of cattle from the U.K. in 1990.

Every year thousands of immigrants enter Canada without being screened for HIV. Although many years can pass before HIV carriers develop full blown AIDS, the virus is readily detectable by a cheap, effective blood test.

Is it not in the best interests of the immigrants themselves and their families, as well as the Canadian public, for them to know if they are carrying the deadly HIV virus?

In light of the vote taken two hours ago on Motion No. 285, it is now apparent that Agriculture Canada's concern for the health of Canadian cattle is greater than the health minister's concern for the health of the Canadian people.

\* \* \*

#### ATLANTIC THEATRE FESTIVAL

**Mr. John Murphy (Annapolis Valley—Hants, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, a new and exciting artistic event in Atlantic Canada is being prepared for launching in June 1995.

The town of Wolfville, Nova Scotia, in my riding of Annapolis Valley—Hants will be host to the newly created Atlantic Theatre Festival.

Recently I had the chance to attend a fundraising event for the festival. I am confident it will be of great cultural benefit to the region while providing tremendous social and economic spin-offs.

The successful organization of the festival is an example of what can be achieved when all levels of government and community interest groups work in co-operation to achieve a common goal.

I offer my congratulations to all those involved and in particular to Michael Bawtree, the festival's founder. I know their hard work and dedication will lead to great success.

\* \* \*

[*Translation*]

#### PARLIAMENTARY INTERNS

**Mr. Ronald J. Duhamel (St. Boniface, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, welcome to our parliamentary interns. The Parliamentary Internship Program is in its 25th year.

[*English*]

I welcome all these new young people. They are bright, hard working, energetic and highly motivated. They have made and continue to make a tremendous contribution to all of us. We wish them well as they celebrate their 25th year of providing service.

I have said before and I would like to say again that I wish I were in a position where I could facilitate that each member of Parliament who wanted such a young man or young woman to work with him or her would be able to do so.

[*Translation*]

I want to congratulate everyone who has supported them.

[*English*]

The private sector especially deserves a great deal of credit because with the support of government and with the young people it has created a program that is among the finest in Canada and perhaps throughout the world.

I thank all these young men and women.

[*Translation*]

Thank you all, young people, for your assistance.

(1405)

*[English]***QUALITY CONTROL**

**Mr. Andrew Telegdi (Waterloo, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Ottawa Valley chapter of the American Society for Quality Control is hosting its annual conference today at the Congress Centre in Ottawa.

The American Society for Quality Control is the largest quality control network in the world. The society is committed to promotion of total quality in the public and private sectors of our economy. The pursuit of total quality management will enhance Canada's national well-being and global competitiveness.

The session on total quality management in government will be held from 3 p.m. to 4 p.m. today. The federal sector is represented by Harry Swain, deputy minister of industry; the provincial sector by Premier Frank McKenna; and the municipal sector by Mayor Brian Turnbull. The fact that Brian Turnbull, the mayor of the city of Waterloo, is representing the municipal sector reflects the leadership that Waterloo has offered in the area of TQM at the municipal level.

As we strive to meet the deficit targets set by the finance minister, we must ensure that TQM is practised by all departments of the government.

\* \* \*

*[Translation]***MINISTER OF CANADIAN HERITAGE**

**Mr. Laurent Lavigne (Beauharnois—Salaberry, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Canadian Heritage is getting lost in studies, which all contradict one another.

Having commissioned a study on the financing of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation from Nordicity Group Ltd., the minister, obviously unhappy with their recommendations, commissioned another study, from Omnia Communications this time, to conduct a critical analysis of the work done as part of the first one.

The second study found that the first one was based on concepts so outdated and assumptions so shaky that the results were inevitably invalid.

Perhaps the Minister of Canadian Heritage should have conducted the study himself to read into it whatever he wanted. It is outrageous to spend public funds this way. How much did these contradictory studies cost and how much will the next ones cost?

\* \* \*

*[English]***REFUGEES**

**Mr. Art Hanger (Calgary Northeast, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, abuse of Canada's immigration system goes on unchecked by

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the government. In fact Ottawa is to blame for much of the abuse.

On September 9 a Fijian visitor with relatives in Vancouver armed with a refugee lawyer claimed refugee status in Canada. Officials did not know, however, that he needed kidney treatment that he could not get in Fiji.

He checked into St. Paul's hospital in Vancouver. Rather than being placed on a waiting list or being sent home for treatment, federal officials ordered the hospital to put the man at the top of the list for dialysis, despite the fact that six terminally ill Canadians were bumped from the list.

This is an outrage. The refugee system seems to work best for those who want to abuse it. In this case it could cost Canadian lives. I demand that the minister immediately intervene, tell his officials to reverse their decision, put the lives of Canadians first, and prevent those with terminal illnesses from coming to the country and claiming refugee status just to get medical treatment.

\* \* \*

**GOVERNOR GENERAL**

**Mr. Alex Shepherd (Durham, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Canada is evolving as a nation and it is time we reflect on our symbols of nationhood. Canadians want to be part of the process of deciding such a national figure as our head of state.

In cursory surveys I have conducted in public schools in Durham, I have discovered that few of our youth can identify the Governor General. This is partly because they or their parents have not participated in his selection.

Of twenty-four OECD countries only three appoint their heads of state and Canada is one of them. I note the election of the head of state would not require a constitutional amendment but could be done by convention. I suggest that we elect the Governor General at the time of a general election. As an interim step we could have the House vote on a short list prepared by the Prime Minister.

I believe this methodology would give the position of the Governor General more credibility and strength in our federation.

\* \* \*

**NEW DELHI**

**Mr. Gurbax Singh Malhi (Bramalea—Gore—Malton, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, 10 years ago today over 3,000 innocent Sikhs, children, women and men, were killed in the streets of New Delhi. Unfortunately 10 years later no one has been convicted.

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To ensure that justice is done and that such violent acts against innocent minorities are not repeated, on behalf of all Sikh temples in Ontario I urge fellow members to join with me to view a photo exhibition on the riots and human rights violations in the Punjab today in the Commonwealth Room immediately following question period.

I hope that through such efforts Canada can urge the Indian government to bring to justice the perpetrators of the New Delhi riots.

\* \* \*

(1410)

**HIBERNIA**

**Hon. Roger Simmons (Burin—St. George's, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the rash decision by Hibernia management to transfer a large chunk of work from the Marystown shipyard to Saint John makes no sense and has to be reversed.

That was the message that a delegation from the Burin Peninsula and I conveyed this morning to my colleague, the Minister of Natural Resources. I thank her for undertaking to look into our concerns.

The proposed removal of work from Marystown has nothing to do with a lack of expertise, as suggested by my friend from Laurier—Sainte-Marie. On that one he is dead wrong, as I believe he now realizes.

The good news is that the Offshore Petroleum Board is going to review the Hibernia management decision. I am confident it will determine what I believe to be the case, namely that the whole affair has more to do with industry politics than it does with deadlines. The work can be just as quickly done at Marystown as it can be at Saint John and should be.

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*[Translation]***GREENHOUSE GASES**

**Mr. Benoît Sauvageau (Terrebonne, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, at a recent conference of leaders in the natural gas industry, the Assistant Deputy Minister of Energy revealed the government's new strategy for reducing emissions of greenhouse gases. Instead of reducing Canadian emissions of greenhouse gases at the source, Canada is offering financial aid to reduce emissions in various developing countries.

Such a strategy sends a clear message to the industrialized countries that they do not have to act themselves to reduce their own emissions of polluting gases. This new strategy is nothing more or less than an admission of failure by this government, which refuses to put on the table and analyse all concrete measures to reduce the greenhouse effect in Canada, as it promised to do in 1992.

*[English]***MINISTER OF CANADIAN HERITAGE**

**Mr. Grant Hill (MacLeod, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker:

A certain minister of the crown  
Forgets the simple rule,  
That requires him to step right down  
If he has been a fool.  
"As heritage minister, I hang my head,  
I've made a little blunder,  
Please just clarify the rules a bit  
Don't tear my world asunder."  
For what price do we all place  
On friendship and loyalty,  
In Liberal circles there is a space  
For ministers who think they're royalty.  
"Above the rules for mortal men,  
No way will I resign,  
Behaviour like this we see again,  
Who cares if the backbenches whine."  
"But when we sat across the floor  
It was a different story,  
Now that we sit upon this side  
We act just like a Tory!"

\* \* \*

**THE LATE CARL MCNEILL**

**Mr. John Richardson (Perth—Wellington—Waterloo, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, today I was fortunate to take part in a presentation ceremony during which a cheque for \$37,634.61 from the estate of Carl McNeill was presented to the Government of Canada.

Mr. McNeill was a 100-year old resident of my riding who was worried about the legacy of debt that had been left to the younger generation. Mr. McNeill left specific instructions in his will that the money be given to the federal government in order to pay off his share of the national debt to ensure a better future for others.

Walter and Marian MacDougald, long time friends and neighbours of Mr. McNeill, presented the cheque to the Minister of Finance this morning. In addition to Mr. McNeill's donation to the government he also left a substantial amount of money to the University Hospital in London and the Salvation Army.

Carl McNeill set a tremendous example of the kind of patriotism and national loyalty for which all Canadians can strive. I thank him on behalf of all Canadians for his generosity and concern for our great country.

\* \* \*

*[Translation]***LIBERAL PARTY OF CANADA**

**Mr. Robert Bertrand (Pontiac—Gatineau—Labelle, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to tell you that on the weekend I took part in a meeting of the General Council of the Liberal Party of Canada in Quebec City. Over 450 people from all regions of Quebec met there to celebrate the first anniversary of the Liberal government's election and to start to prepare their strategy for the coming referendum campaign in Quebec.

*Oral Questions*

The participants had an opportunity to discuss such important issues as the reform of social programs with members of Parliament and took part in the finance minister's pre-budget consultation. At the end of this meeting, the party members were delighted with the visit from their leader, the Prime Minister of Canada, who had come to give them the signal to mobilize for the coming referendum. It was invigorating to see all these people, representing tens of thousands of party members in Quebec, meet to share their determination and their faith in a united Canada. Congratulations to the organizers and the participants who managed to make this great gathering a real celebration.

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(1415)

*[English]***ETHICS**

**Mr. Ken Epp (Elk Island, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, the word is out. Government auditors are being asked to be more gentle and more mild. They are being asked to emphasize the good things in their reports and to tone down their criticisms. Why are they doing this, you ask. It is because the Access to Information Act now means that the people are actually getting to see these reports.

Could it be the Liberals are afraid of being exposed? Is this why the Prime Minister has appointed his own personal ethics lapdog adviser, for damage control instead of a real independent, answerable to Parliament ethics counsellor? Is this government just as afraid as the Conservatives were that the public will find out what is going on behind closed doors? Are the Liberals keeping their high standing in the polls only because they are hiding the facts?

It is high time that we get some real openness, real honesty, real accountability in government. Canadians are beginning to question whether it will come from this government.

**ORAL QUESTION PERIOD***[Translation]***ETHICS**

**Hon. Lucien Bouchard (Leader of the Opposition, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, in an unprecedented confession, the Prime Minister has admitted that four more ministers—I repeat four more—were guilty of interfering with the CRTC's decision-making process with respect to applications for licences.

Are we to understand that flying in the face of all precedents, the Prime Minister decided not to ask for the resignation of the Minister of Canadian Heritage because he realized he would have had to get rid of four other ministers as well who also tried to exert undue influence on the CRTC?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is not like that at all. In the case of the Minister of Canadian Heritage, I was advised at the beginning of the month, as I said before, and I made my decision at that time; if I had decided to ask for his resignation, I should have done so then and there. The other ministers gave me the information personally, on the weekend.

When I looked at the guidelines I gave all ministers in November when they accepted their appointment, as I explained in my speech earlier this afternoon, a very clear distinction was made. Communications with judges are forbidden; the guideline was quite clear in this respect. In the case of quasi-judicial bodies which themselves very often invite the views of all kinds of people before reaching a decision, we had a different rule. I asked the ethics counsellor to look into this and make some suggestions. I hope we will also receive some suggestions from members of the Opposition. I heard about the situation regarding the other ministers after I asked them to check their files.

**Hon. Lucien Bouchard (Leader of the Opposition, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, if the Prime Minister felt it was appropriate to remind his ministers that it was necessary to protect the independence of courts of law, why did he forget to mention that quasi-judicial bodies, which often hand down decisions that are similar in nature, are even more vulnerable to ministerial interference from their responsible ministers?

My question to the Prime Minister is this: This morning, he mentioned all kinds of figures. He even referred to five or even 10 or 100 cases, but that makes no difference. How could he give the impression that the mistake made by the Minister of Canadian Heritage was not as serious since at least four other ministers did the same thing? Does this mean that for him, frequency attenuates the seriousness of the act?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in the case of the Minister of Canadian Heritage, I made it clear last week that when he was informed that it was interpreted as a supporting letter, although he as the minister did not want to support the application, he himself took the initiative of writing to the parties concerned and made it clear he did not intend to support any applications before the CRTC. We discussed that particular case because he was the Minister responsible for the CRTC.

In the case of the other ministers, they are not responsible for the CRTC but they are members who represented certain interests of their constituents. And that is the dilemma I want to resolve. I have asked Mr. Wilson to prepare some guidelines on the subject, and I hope there will be a debate in the House so that people can help us make the distinction, because in the case of the CRTC, they invite people to express their views before licences are issued. A constituent, his member and in fact members of all parties in this House made representations, and a few ministers, who also happen to be members made the same kind of representations. Perhaps we will have to find a different mechanism so that such members are able to act in the interests of their constituents without compromising their responsibilities as ministers.

*Oral Questions*

(1420)

**Hon. Lucien Bouchard (Leader of the Opposition, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, if a minister is unable to make a distinction between his duties as a minister and his duties as a member, he deserves to be demoted to the rank of ordinary member.

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

**Mr. Bouchard:** Mr. Speaker, I want to ask the Prime Minister whether he realizes that the mistake made by four other ministers as revealed this morning is a serious one. And in that case, does he not realize that what his Minister of Canadian Heritage did is even more serious, because, in addition to being a member of Cabinet, he is the Minister responsible for the CRTC and as such was supposed to protect the CRTC against undue interference from his four colleagues?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in the case of the minister, he himself indicated that he did not intend to intervene to support the application. In any case, the letter did not indicate that he was going to do so but simply that he wanted to be kept informed of further developments.

As for the ministers who wrote, they did not write to the minister. They wrote a letter, which is now a public document, either to the secretary or the chairman of the CRTC. As soon as such documents are received by the commission, they are put in the public file, which any journalist or member of Parliament may check at any time. These were support letters like the 14,000 other support letters the CRTC has received with respect to applications during the past year.

**Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister seems to be making a distinction between a letter of support and any letter of representation. The letters sent by the colleagues of the minister of heritage are indeed letters of support, of direct interference in the affairs of the CRTC.

The Prime Minister had made a commitment to demand irreproachable conduct from his ministers and he even made it one of his priorities in the red book. Yet, he failed his first test miserably. He chose to forgive and forget without first consulting the ethics counsellor.

How can the Prime Minister, who claims to be concerned about integrity, explain to this House that he did not personally direct his ministers, as soon as they were sworn in, to consult the ethics counsellor before getting into trouble like the minister of heritage and other ministers?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the ministers are urged to consult the ethics counsellor, who was appointed only a few months ago. The guidelines we gave them were clear: No communications whatsoever with the judiciary. This prohibition has been in place for at least 15 years.

As for quasi-judicial bodies, they may be contacted in some circumstances but only through the appropriate authorities. So they did not address their letters to the minister but to the commission's secretary general, who does not make any decisions or rulings. I think that only one wrote directly to the chairman.

The Minister of Fisheries and Oceans wrote on behalf of a small francophone community in his riding that would like to receive French-language television. They are criticizing a member for representing people who want to preserve their language, French, in difficult circumstances, but I am of the opinion that the minister would have failed in his duty as a member had he not defended his French-speaking constituents.

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

**Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval, BQ):** How nice, Mr. Speaker! The minister of heritage wrote the Chairman of the CRTC on behalf of a small community in his riding. Frankly, does the Prime Minister not admit that, as this whole affair clearly shows, the government ethics counsellor should be accountable not to his office but to the House of Commons, to ensure that he has some effectiveness, real power and a decisive role?

(1425)

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, among the duties of the ethics counsellor is the requirement to submit an annual report to the House of Commons. This is part of his duties, of the responsibilities assigned to him.

I am surprised to hear the tone of voice used by the Bloc Québécois, whose parent company calls people in, humiliates them, makes them confess, forces them to change their political convictions or fires them because they are not separatists. It is worse than it ever was, even under Duplessis.

[*English*]

**Mr. Elwin Hermanson (Kindersley—Lloydminster, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I listened carefully to the Prime Minister's statement this afternoon. He went to great lengths to compare the actions of members of Parliament to the actions of the member for Laval West with regard to their inquiries into the dealings of the CRTC. What the Prime Minister conveniently left out is that unlike these other parliamentarians, the Minister of Canadian Heritage is ultimately responsible for the CRTC. The Prime Minister is actually saying it is okay for ministers to lobby quasi-judicial bodies like the CRTC.

Why is the Prime Minister allowing this interference to continue without taking any action on the matter?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I said clearly last week that when the minister realized his letter asking to be kept informed was perceived as a matter

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of recommendation, he wrote on his own to state clearly that he did not want his letter to be interpreted that way.

I said that his letter was an honest mistake on behalf of one of his constituents. I would have preferred that it had not been written, but I recognize that nobody is absolutely perfect.

I said that we needed better guidelines. The guidelines are very clear for ministers calling judges. It is completely and clearly described. You cannot do it. That rule has applied to all ministers for at least 10 or 15 years. In the case of quasi-judicial bodies, because they are different and relate to a lot of different cases, we gave more flexibility.

In the case of the CRTC, the CRTC invites people to write to it to give their opinion about who should or should not get a licence. The CRTC received 15,000 such letters last year, five from ministers.

**Mr. Elwin Hermanson (Kindersley—Lloydminster, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I would not say it was an honest mistake. I would say it was a dumb mistake because the minister was in charge of the CRTC.

The Prime Minister's rhetoric this afternoon would hold more weight had he fired the Minister of Canadian Heritage before reworking the ministerial code of conduct. As it now stands the Prime Minister's actions smack of political expediency and desperation.

Will the Prime Minister appoint a truly independent ethics counsellor so that existing preferential rules will be followed and will not have to be revised every time one of his cabinet ministers gets into trouble?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I said earlier that the ethics counsellor reports to the House once a year.

There is a principle which is very clear in my mind: At the end of the day whatever advisers I have around me, whatever counsel I receive about a decision, I have to take the responsibility. I have taken the responsibility. When the minister realized he had made a mistake he tried to correct the mistake on his own.

**An hon. member:** Six months later.

**Mr. Chrétien (Saint-Maurice):** It was not six months after that. The problem was that he did not realize it had been construed like that until the end of September and he acted immediately. I said I would check the guidelines and I realized the guidelines needed improvement. I hope the hon. member will help us find the proper balance. It is the Reform Party which states that if members of Parliament do not do their jobs properly they should be recalled. This is great. They do not want members of Parliament who are ministers not to do their jobs as members of Parliament.

(1430)

**Mr. Elwin Hermanson (Kindersley—Lloydminster, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, we are asking the Prime Minister to be responsible. He is responsible for his ministers and we are asking him to take that responsibility seriously and ask for the resignation.

The current guidelines for ministers are common sense. A minister should not be seen to be giving preferential treatment to his or her friends and should not use this influence for personal or political gain. It is as simple as that.

Will the Prime Minister put the brakes on a damage control machine, muzzle his strategist and do the honourable and responsible thing and demand the resignation of the minister of heritage?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, last week I said no and this week I repeat, no.

[*Translation*]

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

The Prime Minister was informed as early as October 1 of the mistake made by the Minister of Canadian Heritage and decided to forget about it and not seek the advice of his ethics counsellor, Mr. Howard Wilson. The government consulted Mr. Wilson only at the very last moment, that is last Thursday, when the minister's mistake became public knowledge.

Are we to understand that, on October 1, the Prime Minister had already decided to keep his heritage minister, without having consulted his ethics counsellor?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I can only repeat what I said last week, namely that I was informed of the issue, I examined it and I presumed that everyone concerned had been consulted before a recommendation was made to me by the Privy Council Office.

I assumed that Mr. Wilson had been consulted when, in fact, he had not. However, this does not change the nature of the decision. I then decided that, as the minister had himself taken action to correct the situation, and even though I was not pleased, he could continue to fulfill his role as minister. I told the truth last week when I said that I thought Mr. Wilson had been consulted even though this was not the case. I did talk to him on the phone afterwards and he agreed with me. At least, what he told me did not make me change my mind.

In any case, ultimately I am the one who is responsible. I cannot share that responsibility with anyone: I am the Prime Minister of Canada.

**Mrs. Suzanne Tremblay (Rimouski—Témiscouata, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, we heard a version last week and in the version that he is giving now the Prime Minister says that he talked on the phone to Mr. Wilson.

*Oral Questions*

What did Mr. Wilson say to the Prime Minister?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am sorry. I did not express myself clearly. I asked my staff—

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

**Mr. Chrétien (Saint-Maurice):** I talked several times to Mr. Wilson since then. At that time, however, I asked my staff: “Did you phone?” They said: “No.” I then replied: “Phone him”.

When I rose in this House, my staff had provided me with information on Mr. Wilson’s opinion. Later, over the weekend, I had an opportunity to talk to him and discuss how to proceed in the future. This is what we did.

**Mr. Bouchard:** He is contradicting himself!

**Mr. Chrétien (Saint-Maurice):** No, I am not contradicting myself at all. I said that I talked to Mr. Wilson over the weekend. And when I rose in this House, as I said last week, I had asked—

**Mr. Bouchard:** You are confused!

**Mr. Chrétien (Saint-Maurice):** If you listen you will not be confused.

So, Mr. Wilson’s opinion was given to me, and it was to the effect that this was acceptable.

\* \* \*

[English]

**CRTC**

**Mrs. Jan Brown (Calgary Southeast, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister.

My office learned in discussions this morning with the secretary general of the CRTC, and I quote Mr. Darling: “The commissioners on the subcommittee may have been influenced by the minister’s letter”.

When the Prime Minister decided to support the actions of the Minister of Canadian Heritage was he aware that the secretary general of the CRTC believed that the minister’s letter may have influenced the process?

(1435)

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, probably not in this case because the application was denied.

**Mrs. Jan Brown (Calgary Southeast, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, that answer is obvious because this whole process has been tainted. They had no other choice.

The Prime Minister even today has used the minister’s second letter of September 30 as a defence that there was no intervention and that nothing was done wrong. We also know now why this second letter was missing from the CRTC file.

The secretary general of the CRTC says that the second letter was never put in the file because it came too late to be considered by the CRTC. This means that when the CRTC made its decision it was always under the impression that the minister had intervened and it remained so.

Given this new information, how can the Prime Minister possibly continue to defend the integrity of his minister?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, that is proof that the first letter had no effect at all.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**ETHICS**

**Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, last week, the Prime Minister said that he had consulted the ethics counsellor. Last Friday, we learned that the ethics counsellor was only consulted on Thursday morning, only a few minutes or a couple of hours before the speech by the Minister of Canadian Heritage.

Today we are told that the Prime Minister talked to his ethics counsellor, then the Prime Minister claimed that he did not express himself well and that, in fact, he had not talked to the ethics counsellor. If I understand correctly, the Prime Minister’s advisors talked to the ethics counsellor.

I would like to know what the Prime Minister’s advisors told him of the discussion they had with the ethics counsellor. Have I made myself clear enough?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, what I said is that my office contacted the ethics counsellor. When I arrived in the House of Commons, we had the ethics counsellor’s advice. This is what I said.

His advice was given to me personally, and I said in this House that there were no grounds in the opinion he gave to make me change my mind. Over the week-end, I had the opportunity to talk with the ethics counsellor about what we should be doing in the future.

To avoid further controversy, for the time being, the ministers will have to send their recommendations to the ethics counsellor who will decide whether or not it is appropriate to send them to the various agencies concerned, while keeping in mind that every minister is also the elected representative of around 100,000 citizens.

**Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister said earlier that the ethics counsellor agreed with him, and then stopped. Since he did not really agree, I presume—we have to guess—the Prime Minister added: There were no grounds in the opinion he gave to make me change my mind.

It might be because his opinion was different from that of the Prime Minister. We must be able to form our own opinion and the only way we can do so is for the Prime Minister to tell us,

## Oral Questions

today, what was the message he received from his ethics counsellor.

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I assumed full responsibility for the decision and I have nothing to add. I decided that the minister had corrected the situation as best he could at the end of September or the beginning of October, I accepted his explanations and I chose to keep him in the Cabinet.

This is my responsibility, not the responsibility of any counsellor in the government. I cannot share that responsibility with anyone.

\* \* \*

[English]

## CRTC

**Mr. Ken Epp (Elk Island, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, this rhetoric about restoring integrity to government is beginning to sound a little hollow.

Perhaps this government is taking a page out of Mackenzie's book when he wrote: "Integrity is necessary but not necessarily integrity". The Prime Minister said, the red book proclaims, and all the Liberal candidates were talking about it, "open government will be the watchword of the Liberal program".

(1440)

If the Prime Minister really believes in and is promoting an open government, why did he not inform this House when he first became aware of the heritage minister's letter to the CRTC?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I did not feel it was necessary. The letter was a public letter. The letter was in a file that everybody could consult. There was nothing secret about it. You could go and check this application. The minister's letter was the same as that of anybody else who had written representations in the same file. The CRTC welcomes opinion from citizens. The letter from the minister was with the pile of letters that were in the file. It was a public document. I did not feel I was obliged to reveal anything that in theory was known by the public.

**Mr. Ken Epp (Elk Island, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, we are observing here a tennis or ping pong game, back and forth, of responsibility. No one is willing to accept it. The minister does something and does not accept responsibility. The Prime Minister has a responsibility and he is not accepting it.

How is this Prime Ministerial responsibility defined? What are the responsibilities? Where does the buck stop? Are we going to get it there or there?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am have been saying for five days that the buck is stopping here. Right here. That is all.

[Translation]

## ETHICS

**Mr. François Langlois (Bellechasse, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, what is going on here is extremely serious. We heard from the Prime Minister himself that there is profound disagreement between him and his ethics counsellor.

Would the Prime Minister tell us what recommendation the ethics counsellor has made to him in relation to the actions of the Canadian heritage minister?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, those are communications between the ethics counsellor and myself. I said in this House that he told me nothing that could influence me to change the decision I had taken previously.

**Mr. François Langlois (Bellechasse, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, are we to understand from the answer, or rather the lack of answer, from the Prime Minister that the ethics counsellor did advise him either to ask for the Canadian heritage minister's resignation or to force him to leave Cabinet?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I just said that nothing he told me would lead me to change my mind. The responsibility belongs to the Prime Minister in any case, and no matter what advice is given to the Prime Minister, he is the one who decides and in this case he did take his responsibilities.

[English]

**Mr. Monte Solberg (Medicine Hat, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, last week the Prime Minister said that initially he had contacted the ethics counsellor. Then he changed his story and said that someone on his staff had contacted the ethics counsellor but only at the last moment.

Can the Prime Minister tell us who exactly contacted the ethics counsellor and will he provide the House with a transcript of those conversations?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we are not taping conversations. There is no tape of any conversation.

I said last week that the commissioner had been consulted. He has been consulted. That is all and I made the decision. That is what I told you last week. It is what I am telling you today and it is what I will say next week if you ask me a question.

(1445)

**The Speaker:** My colleagues, I would ask you once again please to direct all your comments through the Chair.

**Mr. Monte Solberg (Medicine Hat, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I guess it is kind of like the ethics guidelines themselves. They are not written down either.

I listened to the Prime Minister's statement this afternoon very carefully but found nothing in it to assure Canadians that this will not happen again. The ethics lapdog is still subject to the whims of the Prime Minister's office.



*Oral Questions*

Will the Prime Minister now do what he should have done in his statement and replace the current ethics counsellor with an independent one responsible to Parliament and not the Prime Minister's office?

**Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the ethics counsellor will make a report to the House of Commons once a year but there is a reality. The only person responsible to the nation for the ministers cannot be anybody but the Prime Minister of Canada.

I want to tell the hon. member that I will never run away from my responsibilities. I am responsible for the integrity of the cabinet and I will take all the steps necessary to make sure that there is integrity.

All of us have a problem. We have to make sure that ministers can at the same time respect the commitment they have made at the time of their election to represent their constituents well while they are ministers. This is the problem we are debating at this time.

I want to have the views of members of Parliament on this issue. We cannot deny the people living in the riding of a minister adequate representation here in Ottawa as these ministers promised when they sought their support at the time of the election.

\* \* \*

**TAXATION**

**Mr. Jim Jordan (Leeds—Grenville, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of National Revenue.

Canadians who pay their taxes are justifiably concerned when they hear about Canadians who are able to escape taxation either through the underground economy or loopholes of one sort or another.

What is the Minister of National Revenue doing right now about Canadians who it appears do not pay their fair share of taxes?

**Hon. David Anderson (Minister of National Revenue, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I can assure the hon. member we have responded dramatically with respect to the underground economy and those Canadians who do not pay their fair share of taxes because they evade the existing tax system.

On Friday last I signed an agreement with the province of Ontario, the largest single provincial economy, to combine our efforts against the underground economy. We have done this with seven other provinces. We have new agreements with virtually all the business and professional associations so we can better combat the underground economy.

As a result of these measures we have pulled in many hundreds of millions of dollars in new tax revenue which was not expected by the previous government.

I can assure you also, Mr. Speaker, that because of the success of the 1,200 auditors we have put into this area we will be redoubling our efforts in this regard.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**ETHICS**

**Mr. Michel Guimond (Beauport—Montmorency—Orléans, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister systematically refuses to tell us the ethics counsellor's opinion, as transmitted to him by his officials.

Is it not true that the ethics counsellor gave a different opinion from that of the Prime Minister?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have said several times that the counsellor's opinion was transmitted to me and that nothing forced me to change my mind.

In any case, whatever opinion he could have given me, the ultimate responsibility lies with the Prime Minister. I took my responsibilities because the minister had acted as quickly as possible in a situation which, in my opinion, was not fatal, because he had not made any recommendation.

**Mr. Michel Guimond (Beauport—Montmorency—Orléans, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, what exactly did the ethics counsellor say?

(1450)

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the ethics counsellor always tells the Prime Minister that the latter must take his responsibilities, which he did.

[English]

**Mr. Hugh Hanrahan (Edmonton—Strathcona, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister.

On October 27 the Minister of Canadian Heritage stated he was approached by a constituent, and I quote from *Hansard*, page 7273:

—to write a letter drawing the attention of the CRTC to his application for a radio licence.

The constituent, Mr. Daniilidis, has stated in conversations with Reform Party research staff that he never asked the minister to write a letter on his behalf.

Can the Prime Minister explain this contradiction?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, he certainly went to visit the minister. Perhaps they discussed the weather. Perhaps they discussed the application, and the minister wrote a letter asking for information on this file.

*Oral Questions*

I was not there. I was not privy to the conversation. However I know the minister was visited by his constituent and that led to the letter that is the object of this discussion.

**Mr. Hugh Hanrahan (Edmonton—Strathcona, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister then is suggesting that the constituent in fact did ask for a letter. That is very difficult to understand.

Will the Prime Minister initiate a private and independent investigation into this whole affair so we can finally get to the bottom of it?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is a public document. The hon. member should just go to the CRTC and look at the file. It is public. We do not need an investigation.

It looks like the research group of the Reform Party is not very good.

[Translation]

**Mr. Pierre de Savoye (Portneuf, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister refuses to inform the House on the exact content of the recommendation of the ethics counsellor. Since this is an issue of integrity and public ethics, will the Prime Minister admit that it is now in the public domain?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Of course, Mr. Speaker. It is in the newspapers and in *Hansard*.

**Mr. Pierre de Savoye (Portneuf, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, does the Prime Minister not realize that he jeopardizes his own integrity by hiding the content of that conversation and does he not realize that he should reveal the facts as he knows them?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am sorry but the Leader of the Opposition said earlier that he did not question the integrity of the Prime Minister and I said that the issue was in the public domain. We have discussed that. The letter was written by the minister and has been made public. The second letter that was sent has also been published. I have tabled that letter in the House of Commons and the minister has explained the situation to the House. How could we possibly be more open? The counsellors advise the Prime Minister; the advice they give me is for me alone, they are not for the public; I am the one who must make the decision.

[English]

**Mr. Jim Hart (Okanagan—Similkameen—Merritt, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister said today that the minister of heritage's letter did not influence the CRTC but on the other hand the secretary general of the CRTC stated that it may have interfered with their decision.

How does the Prime Minister explain this discrepancy?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it had a lot of influence. The application was denied. The minister did not recommend but if you claim he did, his

letter was not of great weight because the applicant did not receive the green light from the CRTC.

I do not know why you can make an argument like that.

(1455)

**The Speaker:** I would once again ask you to please address all of your comments to the Chair. It makes it a lot easier for us.

**Mr. Jim Hart (Okanagan—Similkameen—Merritt, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, this whole situation surely is a comedy of errors. A minister of the crown has obviously breached the public trust and the Prime Minister gives him a Laurel and Hardy handshake.

Given that the Prime Minister will not make public what the ethics counsellor advised, how do we know there is not a discrepancy here as well?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I explained 10 times that the ethics counsellor gave advice to the Prime Minister and other advisers. The Prime Minister cannot get up in the House and say: "I made that decision, but it is not my fault; it is the fault of my advisers." Everyone will laugh.

At the end of the day the Prime Minister is responsible and he is the one who decides. That is exactly what I have done. Nobody can accuse me of running away from my responsibilities. I do not want to blame anybody else. I take full responsibility.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**SOCIAL PROGRAM REFORM**

**Mr. David Berger (Saint-Henri—Westmount, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Human Resources Development.

The minister said that the eligibility criteria for the Program for Older Worker Adjustment are in part arbitrary. An older worker in need will only receive benefits if he was laid off along with several other workers. Under some circumstances, it could be along with a hundred other workers or so.

Does the minister intend to address the needs of the older workers within his social reform?

[English]

**Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Human Resources Development and Minister of Western Economic Diversification, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the member for the question.

As the member knows because he read the paper, there are at least four or five references to the way in which we would like to improve the programs for older workers. Unfortunately some people in the House have not read the document as yet and therefore are not fully aware of the proposals that have been made.

*Routine Proceedings*

Furthermore, we have established in New Brunswick a job core program which is specifically designed as a strategic initiative to deal with the problem of older workers. Evaluating that project will determine whether it has application across the country, providing for a major area of redevelopment for older workers.

In reference to the specific proposal made by the hon. member, I can report to him that applications made by about 75 per cent of all laid off workers who apply in the province of Quebec under the pilot program are accepted, which is the highest level of acceptance anywhere in the country. Last year we had bought close to \$200 million worth of annuities for older workers of Quebec.

It shows that the program is working effectively. As it is a federal-provincial program and we need the co-operation of the provincial government, it is going to be very important that we have the co-operation of the Quebec government to assist us in social reform, so we can have a much better older workers program.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**ETHICS**

**Hon. Lucien Bouchard (Leader of the Opposition, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister will remember that, before appointing the ethics counsellor, he consulted with the leaders of all the parties represented in this House and requested their unanimous consent before making this appointment.

In this context, does he not realize that the advice of the ethics counsellor is not for his sole benefit, but for that of the House as a whole and, as such, is of the public domain? I would therefore ask him to show the transparency expected of him and tell us what the ethics counsellor, being the provider of enlightened and public advice that he is, suggested he should do in such cases.

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I consulted the Leader of the Official Opposition and the Leader of the Reform Party before appointing Mr. Wilson, to give them the assurance that he would fulfil his duties properly. His job is to advise the Prime Minister and the ministers, in their capacity as ministers, as well as members of Parliament, lobbyists and anyone in a situation of conflict of interest. When he advises me on how to run Cabinet, it is to help me make a decision as Prime Minister. He is an honourable man and, I repeat, when his opinion was reported to me, it did not make me change my opinion. I am pleased that the hon. member reminded the House of Commons that, before his appointment, the Leader of the Opposition and the Leader of the Reform Party, considered he was a man of sound judgement and integrity and that he had done his job well.

(1500)

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

**ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS**

[Translation]

**GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS**

**Mr. Peter Milliken (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8), I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the Government's response to 17 petitions.

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[English]

**CONFERENCE ON INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION**

**Hon. Douglas Young (Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to bring to the attention of hon. members that November 1 marks the 50th anniversary of the opening of the Conference on International Civil Aviation to be held at Chicago, Illinois.

It was 50 years ago tomorrow that representatives from 52 countries, including Canada, met to map the future of international civil aviation. Their deliberations led to the signing on December 7, 1944 of the multilateral convention on international civil aviation and the eventual selection of Montreal as headquarters for the newly created International Civil Aviation Organization.

[Translation]

The International Civil Aviation Organization is a United Nations specialized agency responsible for establishing international standards, recommended practices and procedures covering the technical, economic and legal aspects of international civil aviation operations. The organization's membership is made up of 183 contracting states.

November 1st is not only a proud day in the history of civil aviation; it is also a proud day for Canada. The International Civil Aviation Organization is the only UN agency with headquarters in Canada.

We were chosen as the home for this important agency because of our instrumental role at the Chicago Conference. Canada continues in its leadership role in civil aviation and remains a strong supporter of the International Civil Aviation Organization.

[English]

We salute those who gathered at Chicago five decades ago in the closing days of the second world war. In particular, I would

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like to recognize three distinguished Canadians who took part in those deliberations and who are still with us today.

Former Ambassador Escott Reid helped draft the conference documents. He now lives near Toronto.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jean Fournier, the youngest of the Canadian delegates to the Chicago Conference, now lives in Montreal.

[*English*]

Mr. Stanislav Krejcik was a member of the Czechoslovakian delegation. He is now a Canadian citizen living in the province of Alberta.

[*Translation*]

Canadians know firsthand the paramount importance that safe, regular, efficient and economical air transportation plays in building communities, and in contributing to development and economic well-being. We are grateful to the International Civil Aviation Organization for helping to ensure the safety and security of air transportation worldwide.

(1505)

Commemorative activities, including flag raisings at airports across the country, will mark tomorrow's anniversary of the opening of the Chicago conference. And in December, in Montreal, we will hold celebrations marking the signing of the Convention on International Civil Aviation.

[*English*]

It can only be hoped that the same spirit of mutual understanding and co-operation that has made the International Civil Aviation Organization so successful for over 50 years will continue.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Michel Guimond (Beauport—Montmorency—Orléans, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the International Civil Aviation Organization, commonly known as the ICAO.

Quebecers are particularly proud that this important UN organization chose Montreal and the Province of Quebec for their administrative headquarters in 1944.

In 1944, air transport was marginal with only 9 million passengers. Flying has now become a vital means of transportation for the global economy. Every year, over 1.2 billion passengers fly in total safety. Air transport remains the safest means of transportation, an achievement we owe in large part to the ICAO. I wish to let this organization know how grateful I am for this.

Nobody can predict what flying will be like in 50 years. The number of passengers will certainly continue to increase, and technological progress will bring dramatic changes to this mode

of transport. I am convinced that the ICAO will be up to the challenges of tomorrow, just as it was able to meet those of the past.

The ICAO is a perfect example of what sovereign nations around the globe can do when they co-operate. Through the ICAO, 183 member states managed to put in place a safe air transport system for their people. It is a major achievement.

Given the importance of flying as today's and tomorrow's mode of transport, it is more critical than ever to ensure its safety. Collaboration and co-operation among the member states will remain paramount.

In closing, I want to thank and congratulate all those who contributed to the creation and development of the ICAO in the first 50 years of its existence. I would like to extend to this organization my best wishes for continued success in the next 50 years.

[*English*]

**Mrs. Daphne Jennings (Mission—Coquitlam, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I want to rise today to thank the hon. Minister of Transport for bringing the 50th anniversary of the opening of the Conference on International Civil Aviation to the attention of this House.

In the absence of our critic for transport, the member for Kootenay West—Revelstoke, I too would like to extend the best wishes of my party to former Ambassador Reid, Monsieur Jean Fournier, and Mr. Stanislav Krejcik.

We as Canadians can be proud of the fact that the International Civil Aviation Organization is located in Montreal. We should never take for granted the high esteem in which our country is held in these matters.

International Civil Aviation Organization standards, more commonly known as ICAO standards, affect safety and security standards even at airports serving many of our smaller communities. These same airports are now in the process of being transferred from the federal government to local authorities and in some cases even to private operations. I hope the minister will ensure that reasonable standards are maintained both at privatized airports and in the potentially privatized air navigation system, while also ensuring that the system does not become overly regulated with bureaucratic policies.

I am sure that ICAO will continue to lead the way to ensuring safe international standards throughout the aviation world and that other organizations, both governmental and private, will recognize the need and capabilities of countries to work together to resolve items of conflict in other areas.

(1510)

On a personal note, all of us in this House, especially those of us from ridings that are basically only accessible by air realize the importance of safe air travel.

*Routine Proceedings*

I wish to congratulate the International Civil Aviation Organization for its fine work on behalf of all of us. I wish it well in the future.

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**COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE**

## CANADA'S DEFENCE POLICY

**Hon. William Rompkey (Labrador, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present to the House in both official languages the report of the special joint committee of the House of Commons and the Senate on the review of Canada's defence policy.

This is the first comprehensive parliamentary review of defence policy in the history of Canada. Here we present our conclusions on the principles, purposes and objectives that should guide Canada in setting defence policy.

We believe the Canadian Armed Forces is a national institution we can all be proud of because of its past record. As well, it is of vital importance in the future to Canada's position as a world trading nation given our strong interests in peace and stability.

We have made recommendation to shape a defence policy that reflects the balance between what Canadians would like to do and what we can afford.

I would like to thank the close to 300 witnesses who appeared before us over the last seven months and those who sent us briefs and suggestions. I also want to thank those members of Parliament of all parties who worked so diligently and so co-operatively to produce this report. There was a great deal of consensus among us and I am confident this report will stand the test of time.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Jean-Marc Jacob (Charlesbourg, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, to continue what the hon. member just said, I would add that the Bloc Québécois also participated in this review of defence policy and the Bloc submitted a dissenting report on some points, which is in the same book.

[*English*]

**Mr. Rompkey:** Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I wonder if we could seek the unanimous consent of the House to hear representation from the Reform Party on the special joint committee report by the member for Saanich—Gulf Islands.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger):** The House has heard the terms of the proposal of the hon. member for Labrador. Is there unanimous consent?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Mr. Jack Frazer (Saanich—Gulf Islands, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, my Reform colleague and I being new to Parliament had not previously participated in any parliamentary committees.

We consider it a great privilege and also a lot of work to proceed with this study. It is my impression that the members of the committee were very apolitical in the approach to the studies that we conducted.

As the member for Labrador has said, we heard from witnesses from Victoria to St. John's and from NATO to Zagreb. The results of our study are that we have taken into account the defence needs of Canada. We have tried to reconcile that with the fiscal responsibility that we have to abide by. I am hoping that the outcome will find favour with most people.

Those who are looking for a revolutionary report will be disappointed. However I think when they look at the report and examine it, they will find that it is logical, it is common sense and it will support Canada in our defence needs through the beginning of the next century.

\* \* \*

[*Translation*]

**PETITIONS**

## POSTAL SERVICE

**Mr. Jean-Guy Chrétien (Frontenac, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the municipal council of Plessisville, I am pleased to present a petition with 60 signatures.

(1515)

The petitioners want the Canadian government to inform the municipal council of Plessisville before procedural changes that would affect the local employment level are made. Also, these petitioners ask that equitable home mail delivery service be maintained for all residents of Plessisville.

The residents of Gérin-Lajoie, Trudel and Dupont streets must be treated fairly. They are not second-class citizens and are therefore entitled to the same postal service as other residents of the town.

I am pleased to support these users of the postal service and Mayor Jacques Martineau of Plessisville, in the riding of Frontenac.

[*English*]

## HUMAN RIGHTS

**Mr. Philip Mayfield (Cariboo—Chilcotin, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise to present a petition from constituents in the communities of Cache Creek, Ashcroft, Clinton, Spences Bridge and Hanceville, British Columbia.

My constituents call upon the government not to amend the Human Rights Act or the Charter of Rights and Freedoms in any way which would tend to indicate societal approval of same sex relationships or homosexuality.

They also call upon the government not to amend the Canadian Human Rights Act to include sexual orientation in the prohibited grounds of discrimination.

*Routine Proceedings*

I concur with these petitioners.

**Mr. Bob Mills (Red Deer, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to rise today to present to Parliament two separate petitions signed by constituents in my riding of Red Deer.

With respect to the first petition the citizens express their disapproval to the government regarding any privileges extended to same sex relationships.

The petitioners humbly pray and request that Parliament not amend human rights code, the Human Rights Act or the Charter of Rights and Freedoms in any way which would tend to indicate societal approval of same sex relationships.

## ASSISTED SUICIDE

**Mr. Bob Mills (Red Deer, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, with regard to the second petition, the citizens express their sentiments and great concern with respect to the aiding or abetting of suicide, active or passive euthanasia.

Therefore, the petitioners humbly pray and request that the present provisions of the Criminal Code of Canada prohibiting assisted suicide be enforced vigorously.

## SENIORS

**Mr. Ronald J. Duhamel (St. Boniface, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have a petition from seniors in my riding who point out that much of what we have in Canada today is in great part as the result of their sacrifices and what they have contributed to society.

They point out that they are growing in numbers. As they grow in numbers programs such as health and pensions et cetera will be under additional stress. They want to accentuate the fact that they need comfortable housing, social and community involvement, as well as affordable medical care.

These petitioners on behalf of seniors want to underline that whenever governments are changing programs or making any decisions, they should keep in mind the contribution seniors have made to this country.

## ASSISTED SUICIDE

**Mr. David Iftody (Provencher, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of my constituents in Provencher to present two petitions. The first is from the Ukrainian Catholic Women's League.

They respectfully pray that Parliament continue to reject euthanasia and physician assisted suicide in Canada and that the present provisions of section 241 of the Criminal Code of Canada which forbids the counselling, procuring, aiding or abetting of a person to commit suicide be enforced vigorously and that Parliament consider expanding palliative care that would be accessible to all dying persons in Canada.

## HUMAN RIGHTS

**Mr. David Iftody (Provencher, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the second petition is on behalf of a church in Steinbach, a community I represent.

The petitioners pray and request that Parliament not amend the human rights code, the Canadian Human Rights Act or the Charter of Rights and Freedoms in any way which would tend to indicate societal approval of same sex relationships or of homosexuality, including amending the human rights code to include in the prohibited grounds of discrimination the undefined phrase sexual orientation.

## CRIMINAL CODE

**Mr. Jim Jordan (Leeds—Grenville, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have two petitions. The first calls upon Parliament to recognize the public threat of dangerous offenders and to amend the Criminal Code to have such offenders detained indefinitely at warrant expiry when it is believed that they may cause serious physical, psychological harm or death to another person.

This petition is signed by people from all across southern Ontario.

## RIGHTS OF THE UNBORN

**Mr. Jim Jordan (Leeds—Grenville, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the second petition has to do with the sanctity of life.

The petitioners call upon Parliament to act immediately to extend protection to the unborn child by amending the Criminal Code to extend the same protection enjoyed by born human beings to unborn human beings.

(1520)

## HUMAN RIGHTS

**Mrs. Carolyn Parrish (Mississauga West, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to present two petitions, the first one on behalf of Dr. Eron Horton and Glen Reist of the Mississauga Gospel Temple in my riding. The second one was given to me by Dr. Lester Laird, also a constituent in my riding.

The petitioners request that Parliament not amend the Canadian Human Rights Act or the Charter of Rights and Freedoms in any way which would tend to indicate societal approval for same sex relationships or homosexuality.

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**QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER**

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

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger):** Shall all questions stand?

*Government Orders*

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

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## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

### CANADIAN ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT ACT

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-56, an act to amend the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger):** Prior to resuming debate I wish to inform the House that pursuant to Standing Order 33(2)(b) because of the two ministerial statements Government Orders will be extended by 53 minutes.

**Mr. Bill Gilmour (Comox—Alberni, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity to speak on this bill today.

As a member of Parliament and Reform critic for the environment I am pleased to be able to serve as a check on government legislation to be assured that it is in the best interest of all Canadians and to ensure the continued protection of our environment.

As opposition critic it is not my intention to simply criticize for the sake of being critical. I will support legislation that is in the best interest of the environment and ensure this government is taking the proper steps toward protecting the environment with a fair balance between the economy and the environment. However if these factors are not taken into account I will oppose the initiative and offer constructive criticism.

During the first year of this 35th Parliament the government has been slow to move on many issues, including the environment. There has been of late a lot of talk and grandstanding but not a great deal of action.

I am pleased with the direction of this bill. It is a good start. However there is a great deal of work to be done in the area of environmental assessment. To summarize we need to be proactive and not reactive in our approach to the environment. Rather than cleaning up our mistakes after the fact we must take steps to prevent environmental damage before it occurs. We must get out of the wait and see what happens approach and begin to look into the future to make constructive and bold moves now.

As members of Parliament we must lead by example and do all that we can to protect what is vitally important to the future of Canadians, our own environment. We must ensure that the environment that we leave to our children is as good or in better condition than that which we inherited.

Many will recognize that this is the Brundtland definition of sustainable development and in my view this is the direction in which we should be heading. We must protect our land and our resources to ensure that our children have clean water, sustainable forests and unpolluted crop land. We need to ensure that when we build a bridge, a hydroelectric plant or a landfill that it does not harm the environment, that it does not affect our air, our waterways or our lands.

One way to ensure that projects are safe for the environment is to systematically identify potential environmental consequences of projects before they are started. Unwanted environmental impacts on people, their way of life and their livelihood must be minimized. Environmental assessment attempts to predict the effects of potential environmental proposals prior to their becoming a reality.

To give some historical perspective, I would like to give some background on the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act. The federal government has used environmental assessment since 1974 to predict the potential effects of proposed projects under federal government jurisdiction. Previous federal guidelines under the environmental assessment and review process had been drafted originally as guidelines. These guidelines were only recently elevated to the status of federal regulation.

(1525)

The federal role in environmental assessment has only recently expanded to assess projects that have been approved by provincial governments taking place on provincial lands. Under the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, assessments are applied to all proposals involving federal money, land or responsibility, projects for which the federal government holds decision making authority. Federal Court of Appeal decisions on the Rafferty-Alameda dam in Saskatchewan and on the Oldman River in Alberta confirmed this point.

When a provincial assessment has been conducted, every project, decision or responsibility requires an environmental assessment where some federal concerns have not been dealt with or where the federal and provincial processes are not on an equal footing.

Recently we have seen a number of projects challenged on the grounds that they involve federal jurisdiction. There are currently four types of environmental assessment to address different projects and circumstances. These four types, as the minister stated earlier, include screening, comprehensive study, mediation and review by an independent panel.

The first two, screening and comprehensive study, are the most preliminary and account for approximately 30,000 assessments per year or 99 per cent of all federal projects assessed. Screening is usually applied to small scale projects that are quite straightforward. Comprehensive study is usually applied to larger scale, environmentally sensitive projects.

*Government Orders*

Mediation is the third type and is a voluntary approach to environmental assessment by which an impartial mediator is appointed by the environment minister to help parties resolve issues surrounding projects. It is only used when interested parties are few and consensus is possible.

Finally, when a project requires further evaluation it is referred to the Minister of the Environment for review by an independent public panel. This is the highest form of review. It is usually applied to contentious projects. It is the type we read about in the newspapers. It is important for us to note here that these contentious projects amount to less than 1 per cent of the total projects assessed.

These four different evaluation processes provide a range of assessments to meet different project needs. However, what is a cause for concern is the fact that it is up to the discretion of the Minister of the Environment whether he or she may call a public review. What about the other side? What if the minister does not call for a review when there is pressure to call for one? There appears to be a fair amount of discretion regarding the minister's option to simply ignore or postpone a review.

I have concerns regarding the amount of ministerial discretion allowed in the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act. For example, the minister may or may not call for a review. The minister appoints the mediator or panel members. The minister may allow another federal process to be substituted for an environmental review and, finally, rather than hire an impartial person to fill the head position of the new agency created by the act, the minister fills this position through appointment, another potential source of patronage.

Another concern I have is how this bill will apply to First Nations. I trust the government will have the common sense to ensure that our environmental assessment laws are applicable to all in Canada, to all Canadians. Whether or not this will be the case is presently unclear.

It appears that First Nations may be exempt from this law as it is unclear where native self-government fits into this legislation. We cannot have one set of standards for most of the country and another set for the remainder. What occurs in one area of the country impacts all Canadians. The laws should protect all equally.

By removing First Nations from federal jurisdiction in environmental assessment we are doing not only a disservice to the natives but a disservice to all Canadians, present and future generations.

Up to this point I have been talking about Canadian environment assessment as a whole. Bill C-56 deals more specifically with three proposed amendments to the act. I would now like to deal with each in turn.

The first amendment proposed in this bill is to amend the act so that intervenor funding for public participation in the review

process is guaranteed. I support this amendment as it encourages increased public participation.

(1530)

The Reform Party strongly encourages public involvement in government decision making as this allows the opportunity for the public to have direct input into environmental decisions affecting their lives. However this amendment must be more clearly defined as funding is not detailed in the bill. It is my view that funds should come from existing environmental department budgets and that the budget should not be expanded simply to satisfy the amendment.

This type of funding can easily be subject to abuse. Therefore it requires clear guidelines with minimum and maximum amounts established. Distribution of funds must be fair, equitable and reasonable.

In terms of accountability, recipients of funding must have clear guidelines to prevent misuse of funds and to ensure taxpayers' dollars realize maximum benefit. This is vitally important at a time when public funds are becoming much harder to come by and the public is demanding the best use of their ever decreasing tax dollar.

There are many stakeholders in the environment decision making process including federal and provincial governments, the private sector and, most important, the public at large. Ordinary Canadians are the most directly affected by the environmental impact of projects. For this reason intervenor funding is an important tool and resource as it enables Canadians to participate in the process.

The second amendment to the act seeks to ensure that responses to public panel recommendations must be decided by cabinet. This means that decisions to act or to reject panel recommendations are not made solely by the Minister of the Environment but by cabinet as a whole. This allows for a more democratic system of accounting because rather than one person holding all the cards, all members of cabinet can debate and vote on the issue. It also reduces the likelihood that environmental decisions will be subject to the whims of any individual minister as government as a whole is given authority on whether or not to carry through on these panel recommendations.

The third and final amendment to the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act proposed in the bill amends subsection 24 by proposing to limit the number of assessments to one federal assessment per project. This amendment ensures that environmental assessments relating to the same project but involving more than one responsible authority, for example fisheries and industry, are co-ordinated to avoid duplication.

Normally when a project is proposed an assessment would be triggered immediately. For example, building a bridge normally triggers several assessments by different departments. In the past each department would conduct its own review, resulting in



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costly overlap, confusion, duplication and a waste of taxpayers' dollars.

One federal assessment per project will reduce costly and time consuming situations such as the Oldman River dam project in Alberta. The overlapping and conflicting assessments of the Oldman River resulted in numerous court battles and many delays, all at great expense to the taxpayer. The federal government assessment was forced through the courts while the province refused to participate. It was simply an impossible situation.

Canadians cannot afford to have various departments within government conducting reviews over and over again. Such extravagant spending as displayed by former governments is clearly not acceptable today. Canadians are demanding one single comprehensive approach to environmental assessment. One federal assessment per project is clearly a step in the right direction. However it is not enough to have one federal environmental assessment. We need to have one environmental assessment, period; not one federal assessment followed by a similar provincial assessment.

While we may reduce the number of federal assessments we still need to address the fact that federal efforts are duplicated by the provinces. The federal government cannot legislate one assessment within Canada because it can only legislate where it has jurisdiction. The provinces also have environmental jurisdiction. The fact remains that with two levels of environmental assessment there is simply too much duplication, overlap, confusion and conflict.

We are still faced with the reality that federal assessments and provincial assessments may conflict. Even if the two assessments agree, a second one is clearly unproductive. The funds going to the second assessment would be better utilized elsewhere.

We need a common set of environmental standards and goals for both federal and provincial levels of government.

(1535)

We require federal-provincial harmonization agreements worked out and signed by the provinces and the federal government. In this way we will have one set of rules and truly one joint assessment per project.

It is not enough for the government to say that it is working toward federal-provincial harmonization agreements. We have had enough talk. Now we need action. These agreements must be worked out and signed immediately.

At present there is only one federal-provincial harmonization agreement in place and that is with Alberta. There are nine other provinces that still need to sign on as well as the ambiguity with native self-government ironed out.

It is clearly the time for federal and provincial governments to begin to work together on environmental matters. It is important that we avoid turf wars between the two levels of government and aim toward common goals because the environment clearly has no borders. When it comes to the environment we must put our differences aside for the common good of all Canadians for this generation and generations to come.

Environmental protection should not be viewed, as with some members of the official opposition, as meddling in someone else's area of jurisdiction. Environmental degradation affects the country as a whole. When one area of the country is faced with severe depletion of fish stocks or another area prospers from its forest industry, the effects ripple throughout the country.

When it comes to environmental concerns, all Canadians are environmentalists as are all members within the House. We may differ on how to attain various environmental goals but protection of our environment is common to all of us.

The question is not whether we should base our legislation on federal or provincial regulation but how best the two parties can satisfy their concerns and come up with one comprehensive set of regulations.

Environmental assessment should be conducted jointly with the provinces where there is an overlap in jurisdiction. When a federal and provincial assessment has been triggered, both levels of government should work together to assess the project rather than each other doing their own study. Clearly this cannot and will not happen without one set of standards and a common goal should be shared by both parties.

It is my hope and expectation that the minister has taken the effort to consult with the provinces and that the legislation and the amendments being brought forward today have had the input of each of the provinces. It is vitally important that any new regulations meet their needs in order for harmonization agreements on the environmental assessment process to proceed as smoothly and as quickly as possible.

Given the nature of Canadian federal and provincial programs overlap is inevitable. Environment was not considered when the Canadian Constitution was drafted resulting in confusion for both levels of government. Even exclusive jurisdiction over any particular area fails to guarantee there will be no overlap. The division of responsibilities has often resulted in conflict between the two powers and has compromised our decision making abilities.

Environmental assessment has been one of the most contentious areas of conflict between federal and provincial powers. Both levels of government have legitimate roles to play in environment and resource management. However both parties must demonstrate a will to set aside their differences and work toward the common goal.

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One of the government's first priorities should be the elimination of overlap because duplication wastes public funds at a time when our dollars are in short supply. A single unified approach to the environment and environmental assessment in particular would result in greater effectiveness with less confusion.

Intergovernmental harmonization agreements co-ordinate activities and clarify roles while at the same time ensuring that common objectives and goals are attained. Clearly smooth and efficient federal-provincial relations depend upon good working relationships and shared policy objectives. For this to occur, federal-provincial relations must take a co-operative rather than a competitive approach.

To illustrate the horrendous cost of duplication, according to a Treasury Board study 45 per cent of federal programs resulting in expenditures of over \$40 billion overlap and compete to varying degrees with provincial programs. We simply cannot afford this duplication of services.

In conclusion, as much as I support the initiative to reduce environmental assessments to one project and one federal assessment, I support it only as a step in the right direction, a step toward one joint federal-provincial assessment. Until the final step of harmonization is achieved with all 10 provinces we will not have reached the ultimate goal of truly one environmental assessment per project.

(1540)

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger):** During the next five hours of debate members' interventions will be limited to 20 minutes maximum subject to 10 minutes of questions and comments.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Clifford Lincoln (Parliamentary Secretary to Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Environment, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to take part in this debate on Bill C-56, an Act to amend the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act. This bill will improve some components of the federal environmental assessment process.

I will take a few minutes to describe briefly the object and scope of the amendments before the House and to try and explain the principles behind this reform.

First of all, I would like to emphasize that these amendments reflect the commitments made in the red book, which is the agenda of the Liberal Party of Canada. Our government is determined to keep these commitments which were made during the last election campaign.

[*English*]

In our view the three amendments are not only essential to the effective implementation of the federal environmental assessment process but are also in keeping with the expectations of the main stakeholders.

We introduced a whole chapter in the red book on sustainable development. We committed ourselves to installing an auditor general of the environment and sustainable development. The minister has already introduced reforms in that regard. We committed ourselves to installing a task force on the economic instruments that would favour the environment and sustainable development. The task force is now at work and will present a report to the ministers of finance and of the environment for eventual inclusion of their recommendations into the February budget.

We committed ourselves to an environmental industry strategy. The strategy has now been introduced to try to help environmental technologies develop themselves and improve their strength and efficiency in Canada for the betterment of our sustainable development strategy overall. We committed ourselves to a review of the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act which by the way is a statutory requirement. This is now in process.

Perhaps the key element of our sustainable development reforms and resolve is contained in the proclamation of the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act to which we committed ourselves. We truly believe and are convinced that environmental assessment is the key element to pollution prevention, to a better environmental standard which leads to quality of life and a sustainable society.

Two of the amendments presented in Bill C-56 are aimed at meeting repeated requests by environmental protection groups from across Canada in recent years. The third amendment is designed to reduce uncertainty and delays in the application of the federal environmental assessment process, a concern which is shared by all stakeholders and certainly by the provinces.

If I could speak to the first amendment which has to do with participant funding, it provides for the legal guarantee of a participant funding program designed to encourage Canadians to take part in public hearings held by environmental assessment review panels.

Participant funding is a major concern of environmental groups and is quite understandable. I should explain that the environmental assessment of major projects that are subject to public hearings is an extremely complex exercise. Generally speaking the environmental assessment of major projects results in several volumes of technical information. For example, in the case of Great Whale several thousands pages of information had to be produced and studied. We cannot expect informed public

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participation unless the groups representing the citizens at large who are directly affected by a project have access to funding to state their case.

(1545)

Participation in the environmental assessment process requires staff, it requires technical resources for analysing reports, drafting a response, preparing briefs and presenting views at public hearings let alone the travel to various points in the land. It is a simple matter of equity.

Some environmental groups and public community groups are faced with tremendous odds when up against huge institutions and corporations which have unlimited funding to present their case. The need for participant funding is not new. It was identified many years ago. The 1987 white paper on the reform of the federal environment review process entitled "Reforming Federal Environmental Assessment" addressed this need and proposed the establishment of a participant funding program.

Following national public consultation carried out as part of the reform, some funding was made available by the previous government. The funds were administered by the Federal Environmental Assessment Review Office, FEARO, and were provided to participants in the activities of federal or joint panels reviewing such projects as, for example, Soligaz in Quebec, the St. Marguerite hydroelectric project in Quebec and the Vancouver airport project.

However, the previous government refused to make a firm commitment or to guarantee participant funding for all the environmental assessments. In this respect the current wording of the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act is unsatisfactory for it simply allows a minister to create a participant funding program.

The wording of Bill C-56 goes much further. It creates the obligation to establish a participant funding program in keeping with the Liberal Party's red book commitment which reads:

A Liberal government will amend the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act to legally recognize intervenor funding as an integral component of the assessment process.

This is what we are doing by this very important amendment.

[*Translation*]

The second amendment provides for only one federal assessment per project. It results from the more general commitment made by the government to improve the efficiency of federal government services and to significantly reduce duplication. This amendment will ensure that, to the extent possible, only one federal environmental assessment will be conducted with respect to a project.

In fact, the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act already contains many provisions to avoid duplicating similar provin-

cial processes. It provides for delegation of authority where pre-assessments, comprehensive studies and follow-up programs are concerned. It also provides for signing harmonization agreements and creating "single windows" in each of the provinces. The Canadian Environmental Assessment Act also includes provisions to facilitate the work of joint panels.

[*English*]

Several years ago I happened to be minister of the environment for Quebec. At that time I negotiated long and hard with the federal minister of the time, Mr. McMillan, to try and get to the very position we are in today in the act, which is to have some sort of a process whereby the federal government and the provinces would be able to install joint panels. In the case of provincial jurisdictions there would be provincial panels with the federal government sending observers if it had an interest in the project, or vice versa, or sometimes mixed panels.

I remember a case that was under discussion, the airport in Saint-Jean, where unfortunately we were not able to arrive at a conclusion of this process. Now we will be able to.

[*Translation*]

This amendment has two goals. First, it seeks to co-ordinate information requirements throughout the federal civil service, should a project be subject to more than one study under the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act.

(1550)

For example, when a project funded by the federal government also requires a permit under the regulation, it is theoretically possible that two different assessments will be necessary. In such cases, we want to give the developer the assurance that the assessment will meet the requirements of all the federal authorities involved.

Time is the other aspect of this amendment. Whenever possible, we want the environmental assessment to meet the information needs of federal authorities for the duration of the project. We want to avoid asking the developer to conduct an assessment at the planning stage, another one at the implementation stage, another one when work is temporarily interrupted and another one when equipment is no longer used and activities are permanently shut down.

It is true that the legislation in its present form contains some provisions requiring co-operation among federal authorities. For example, section 12 stipulates that where there are more than one responsible authority in relation to a project, they shall together determine the manner in which to perform their respective duties and functions. Nothing in the existing legislation forces them to require only one assessment for each project. This is totally unacceptable if our goal is to have a coordinated, effective and consistent process, and I am sure it is the goal we are all pursuing.

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With this amendment, the federal government is doing its share. The amendment is designed to meet the legitimate expectations of those who are justifiably opposed to conducting more than one environmental assessment for the federal government. Combined with the current harmonization initiative undertaken by the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment, I am hopeful that this amendment will help us reach our ultimate goal, which is to conduct only one environmental assessment with respect to a project, no matter how many authorities are involved.

[*English*]

I am sure the third amendment will contribute to curbing Canadians growing dissatisfaction with government and to restoring parliamentary integrity.

Again I would like to quote the Liberal Party's red book which addresses this particular problem. On page 87 it states:

The people are irritated with governments that do not consult them, or that disregard their views, or that try to conduct key parts of the public business behind closed doors.

The manner in which the previous government dealt with panel recommendations certainly fueled the public's dissatisfaction with Canada's democratic institutions. Indeed, when a major project raised public concerns, the scenario was always the same. A review panel was established. It studied the possible impacts of the project for months and sometimes even for years. It consulted the public affected by the project. It then drafted a detailed report containing specific recommendations.

However, as soon as one of these reports reached a federal minister's desk, unexplainable things would happen. In some cases the minister responsible would examine the report and make a decision without consulting his or her colleagues. In other cases the cabinet would meet to study the recommendations of the panel and would decide, for its own reasons which it did not have to divulge, to ignore the most important ones. In most cases the previous government's decisions were completely out of line with the key recommendations set out in the panel's reports.

Under certain circumstances I agree that this may be perfectly justified. Unlike panel members, who are appointed and who are not accountable to the public, the members of government are elected to make decisions.

This said, it is in our view unacceptable for a government to entrust a panel of experts with a task of examining an issue and with consulting the public and then to turn around and reject their recommendations with no explanation for its decision. Environmental protection groups and the media were very often critical of previous governments' decisions.

(1555)

In most cases they felt that short term economic and political gains would take precedence over the long term environmental benefits that form the basis of most recommendations made in the panel reports.

If the government systematically ignores the panel's recommendations, it will be difficult to restore the public's confidence in our institutions, be it in regard to the environment or otherwise. In fact the principle of public consultation itself is thus called into question.

It will also be very difficult to convince proponents to comply with the process and to find qualified individuals to serve on the panels. Besides, it will not be easy to convince affected Canadians to take part in the hearings. How can we hope to encourage public participation if the government is completely free to ignore all recommendations and if it is not required to provide the reasons behind its decisions? Under these circumstances, how will the government be able to convince Canadians that it made the right decision in the first place?

The point is not to tie the hands of decision makers and to give non-elected panel members decision making powers, but rather to restore a proper and judicious balance. If the government decides to accept the recommendations of an environmental assessment panel, everyone wins. However, should it decide to accept certain recommendations and to reject others, it will be required to provide explanations. If its explanations are clear, the integrity of the environmental review process will remain intact.

The problem that arises from the desire to strike a balance between ministerial prerogative and the recommendations of environmental assessment panels was addressed in the 1987 white paper to which I have referred before on the reform of the federal assessment process.

The proposed amendment will require the responsible minister to draft a response to the recommendations of an environmental assessment panel. This response will have to be examined and approved by the governor in council, in other words by the cabinet.

[*Translation*]

This bill meets real needs, and it improves the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act. The government's goal is to have only one federal assessment on any given project. The creation of a participant funding program will encourage Canadians to participate in the hearings conducted by review panels.

Finally, the principle of openness in government will apply, because the government will have to respond officially to the recommendations made by review panels. Those amendments will contribute to restore public trust in federal democratic

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institutions. The government intends to proclaim the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act in January 1995.

The four required regulations have been published in Part II of the *Canada Gazette* on October 19. The amendments before us should be passed as soon as possible, because all Canadians stand to gain from their early implementation after the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act has been proclaimed.

[*English*]

The environment knows no boundaries. It is a matter of equity. It is a matter of common sense. It is a matter of a sustainable society for all of us besides the coming generations.

I could not help but find it strange when the critic for the Bloc Québécois referred to—

[*Translation*]

—a guardianship being forced on the province of Quebec. The Bloc Québécois also claims that profound changes have been made since the present Leader of the Opposition introduced the bill a few years ago. The amazing thing is that, since the environment minister made her statement on the proclamation of the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, there has not been a single question asked about that so-called jurisdictional calamity. There have been questions on all sorts of things, and countless questions on tobacco. But the environment does not seem to be such an important issue.

(1600)

In fact, not a single question was asked about such a supposedly important decision as putting the province under guardianship. Indeed, the Leader of the Opposition himself and his party's critic had every opportunity to make any statement they liked on the subject. There were only two, one just before the 1993 election and another on October 13, 1994, to the *Gazette*, in which he said that he was satisfied with the law and that there was no petty squabble between Mr. Parizeau and him on this subject, because he approved of the law and thought that it was a good one.

We must set our petty squabbles aside and realize that the environment is much larger than all of us, that we must co-operate and have the will to work together. That is what we want to do, on this side of the House, by presenting these amendments. We want to be co-operative, positive and build things for ourselves and future generations.

**Mr. Benoît Sauvageau (Terrebonne, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask a short question of the member for Lachine—Lac-Saint-Louis. I will not take all of the ten minutes and I will leave ample time for him to answer. As he said before in his speech, the member for Lachine—Lac-Saint-Louis was Minister of the Environment in the Quebec government at one point.

I would like him to explain in clear and simple terms how he can justify his support for the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act when his former government, through the former Minister for the Environment, Mr. Paradis—if we can mention his name in this House—succeeded in obtaining unanimity in the provincial legislature, not only a sovereigntist vote, not only a partisan vote, but unanimity, on the position of the then Liberal government of Quebec, his former government, being against any intrusion on the part of the federal government in the area of environmental assessment.

I think the former Minister of the Environment could easily explain the change of opinion he experienced while going from the Quebec to the Ottawa government.

**Mr. Lincoln:** Mr. Speaker, I cannot answer for Mr. Paradis, but all I can say is that when I was environment minister in Quebec, I had appointed an associate deputy minister, Mr. Divay, who worked actively with the federal government to seek the kind of administrative agreement which was signed today between Alberta and the federal government.

In fact, I could quote several cases of joint work which was done as actively as possible, for example, in the case of Sainte-Marguerite, in the case of the Lachine canal, which is a current case where joint panels have been established between the federal and provincial governments. In fact, I would like to refer the hon. member for Terrebonne to a statement which was made just recently to the *Montreal Gazette* by the Leader of the Opposition—unfortunately, I cannot find my quote, but in any case, it is official, it is widely known and I would be very pleased to send it to the hon. member for Terrebonne—where the Leader of the Opposition is criticizing Mr. Paradis for getting angry.

He says in the *Gazette*: “I do not know why Mr. Paradis got so excited, because that legislation is a very good piece of legislation”. So, perhaps the hon. member for Terrebonne should speak to his leader and ask him why he thought that Mr. Paradis got too angry when he intervened on Bill C-13. There were several quotes from the Leader of the Opposition. I will quote his statement to Mr. Jean-François Lisée on October 21, 1993. Mr. Jean-François Lisée asked him: “What is going to happen? Are you going to oppose Jacques Parizeau if he comes to power in a few months?”, speaking about Bill C-13, the same legislation we are talking about today. This was just before the election, a few days before the election, and he answered: “Oh no, Mr. Parizeau will also abide by the law. The P.Q. has accepted the position”.

But later, just recently, a few days ago, he said repeatedly that the bill is well-founded, that he does not see in it any federal and provincial jurisdictional quarrel and that there is a way to find a common ground if we arrive at some agreements. That is what we want to do, that is what I tried to do as environment minister

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in Quebec. For me, the environment has always been much more important than jurisdictional quarrels and petty squabbles.

(1605)

I believe that every one must respect each other's jurisdictions, but we must do it in a constructive way, by trying to find solutions instead of confrontational elements. That has always been my position.

[English]

**Mr. Bill Gilmour (Comox—Alberni, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, the minister has stated that she is working toward provincial harmonization. I would like to draw on the member's expertise as a former Quebec environment minister because we seem to have a number of opposing forces at work. I applaud the Liberal's initiative to work toward harmonization. However we have a government in Quebec that is saying that environment is its jurisdiction. In the member's experience, is harmonization going to happen, will it happen and can it happen with the forces that are opposing each other in Quebec?

**Mr. Lincoln:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to respond to my colleague who is a fellow member of the committee on environment and sustainable development, as is the member for Terrebonne. We show in committee that we can work in great harmony and in a very positive climate regardless of party stripes. It has always been my view that this is the way to do it.

For one year I was president of the Council of Environment Ministers of Canada. I found there was a tremendous amount of goodwill. Sure there were quarrels and disputes as regards jurisdiction. There always will be in a federal system. There always will be in any system. That is the way the world works. At the same time, if we put our differences aside, we can find ways to harmonize our views and our objectives.

For example, the Canadian Council of Environment Ministers has been actively working. Civil servants from the federal government and every province have been working together for a particular harmonization protocol on this very question of environmental assessment. It has worked very actively.

During the term of Minister Paradis who unfortunately is no longer minister because the government was defeated, Mr. Paradis insisted and made sure that a senior civil servant from Quebec was present and took an active part in the deliberations. Unfortunately that is no longer the case because since proclamation of the act Quebec has withdrawn its representative. All the other provinces are working actively. The minister has written to Quebec's minister praying that he rejoin the ranks.

I am certain that agreements can be put into place that respect fully the provincial jurisdictions. The federal government does not want to encroach. All it wants to do is to ensure that when federal prerogatives such as the Fisheries Act are involved that it complies with the dictates of the Supreme Court, it complies with the wishes of Canadians and that among us and between us instead of duplicating our efforts we make them complementary, integrate them for the benefit of all of us.

I am convinced we can do that. We have to have the resolve and that resolve starts among us here. If it is transmitted along and the provincial governments realize that we want to co-operate, to act together rather than confront, it is going to happen. I hope it is going to happen too with the Government of Quebec.

**Mr. Len Taylor (The Battlefords—Meadow Lake, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I have a short question in the interests of time for the parliamentary secretary who I know has done a tremendous amount of work on the proclamation of the act.

Talking about provincial jurisdiction and joint panels, joint panels are something I am very supportive of. I believe the act has gone a long way to ensuring that joint panels will be able to do the job.

However, can the parliamentary secretary explain how the government will attempt to prevent certain confrontations that will exist with the provinces? The public examples which have brought us to the act we have today are the Rafferty-Alameda dam in Saskatchewan and the Oldman dam in Alberta. Both are examples where the provinces, the proponents of the projects were adamant about no federal involvement in environmental assessment. At the same time these projects point out the incredible need for adequate environmental assessment. The proclaimed act which was Bill C-13 has gone a long way to deal with that.

(1610)

Can the parliamentary secretary give us some idea of how he thinks the government will deal with conflicts with provinces which are for the most part proponents of projects that are problems?

**Mr. Lincoln:** Mr. Speaker, much has changed since the cases referred to by my hon. colleague. First there is a Supreme Court decision which makes it quite clear that when the federal government has a jurisdiction it not only should get involved, it has the duty and obligation to get involved. It does not have any chance or opportunity to escape. It must get involved.

There was a timidity before on the part of the federal government to intervene where it had a clear case of jurisdiction, for example on Canadian waters, on fisheries. Now this case is clear. There has been pressure from the Canadian public

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to say to their federal government that it has to get involved because it represents a big part of the total jurisdiction.

What will happen now in the case of the provinces and the federal government is that there will be a sensitization that they have to work together, that we cannot confront each other any more. I think this will happen.

There was a recent case in my own province. The Lachine Canal has been an example of a problem which could have led to confrontation but a joint panel was extremely effective and under the provincial system works extremely well. That is going to become the practical way of doing things in the future.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Benoît Sauvageau (Terrebonne, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to say to my colleague from Lachine—Lac-Saint-Louis that I understood something from his speech. He is in favour of doing away with overlapping provided the issue is resolved in favour of the federal government. I think I understood that correctly. We are against overlaps, move over, we will take all the room, this way everybody will be happy. Except he was not quite that blunt.

It is with great interest that I rise to speak on Bill C-56 and the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act. That legislation was to create a new agency to assess all projects which could have an environmental impact. As you will notice, there is no way I can agree with that legislation. Indeed, as an elected representative from Quebec and a defender of Quebec's interest, I must express my dissatisfaction with the federal government's interference with provincial affairs.

As we all know—and the Minister of the Environment knows it as well—there is in Quebec, as in other Canadian provinces, an office of environmental assessment. We call it the BAPE. The mandate of this bureau is to assess projects that have an environmental impact, and it has acquired an international reputation. Quebec is a leader in the area of environmental assessment.

Moreover, the new Minister of the Environment in Quebec announced recently that they would legislate to include assessment of industrial projects into the existing assessment process, even though these projects were already assessed by his department. The Bureau d'audiences publiques pour l'environnement, or BAPE, is a complete, efficient, open and credible process, which answers very well the needs of the population.

The federal government, by promulgating this legislation and tabling regulations on a wide range of projects, imposes a standard system to all provinces regardless of the work already done by the bureau, in Quebec. The Quebec assessment process is operating smoothly and it has proven its worth. Therefore, the federal assessment process will only superimpose itself, adding to the many duplications we already have in our federal system. This bureau will make public administration more cumbersome and the debt will keep on growing.

(1615)

There will be a Quebec bureau and a Canadian agency, both dedicated to the evaluation of projects which could have an impact on the environment. Not only will this situation make public administration more cumbersome and very costly, but it will also be the source of tremendous headaches for proponents who will never know to whom they should report. Moreover, there is no set timeframe, which could unduly prolong the federal evaluation process.

On the other hand, we cannot ignore the fact, as I said earlier, that the previous Liberal government in Quebec was strongly opposed to this bill. Mr. Pierre Paradis, the then environment minister, who was a strong supporter of Canadian federalism, denounced this bill, going as far as saying, appearing before the Senate, that this piece of legislation was a reflection of a domineering and authoritarian federalism. It is Mr. Paradis, a strong supporter of federalism, and not separatists, who shed this light on this bill.

Needless to say, at the time, the National Assembly had unanimously supported the environment and wildlife minister in his fight. What we are talking about here has nothing to do with political affiliation or petty squabbles; it is simply a matter of plain common sense. Quebecers are outraged by the ludicrousness of this bill and of the situation it is creating and will create. The total lack of flexibility on the part of this government which refuses to take the Quebec process into account while amending the act, should not come as a surprise.

Moreover, the government seems to forget that the issue of environmental assessment is part of the federal-provincial harmonization process, as the parliamentary secretary to the environment minister mentioned earlier. The process is part of the agenda of the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment, but while discussions are still ongoing, the federal government decides to interfere. What is the point then of having any discussion? We can easily predict what the famous four-year, \$12 million health forum will result in. The report must already be written and just waiting to be published. The government forgot that the federal-provincial environment harmonization process was on the agenda. To what extent should we trust this exercise if, at the very first opportunity, the government overlooks Quebec's demands and recommendations?

The government is lending a deaf ear to Quebecers, in spite of the fact that they have unanimously expressed their displeasure loud and clear.

I would like to quote a member from the other party, the Liberal member for Ottawa Centre. "The time has come for the different levels of government to agree on a somewhat clearer definition of jurisdictions". That is a Liberal speaking. "It seems to me that the two levels of government should get together on matters of environment". We agree with that. "The minister should take a deep breath, go back a ways and consider this goal, that is the co-operation of all parties concerned with environmental protection". Quebec is one of them. "The

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government must make sure everybody follows suit because if another level of government does not approve of federal measures, this bill is doomed to failure". These are his own words.

By its attitude the federal government is mocking the intelligence and common sense of Quebecers. After having flouted their legitimate claims, how can the government come back to the table in order to integrate federal and provincial assessment processes? In any case, after such an insult, there will be one player missing at the table, the Quebec Minister of Environment having recalled his players to Quebec.

As a result, there will be another unavoidable confrontation, this time on environmental matters. Considering the government's attitude about this question, the future of these negotiations is not promising. Moreover, with Bill C-56, the government is charging blindly in an area where jurisdictions are very vaguely defined.

As stated by the Supreme Court of Canada in the decision regarding *Friends of the Old Man Society*, "in the context of a federal constitution, environmental management should not be considered as a constitutional unit coming under only one level of government".

(1620)

It is obvious in this case that the government is ignoring the recommendations it has received from all sides on the issue of the environment.

Moreover, the minister is trying to minimize the controversy about Bill C-56 by mentioning that this bill was first introduced by the Leader of the Opposition when he was himself environment minister.

As Mr. Yergeau, a lawyer specialized in environmental law, explained so clearly in an article published in a 1992 issue of the daily newspaper *Le Devoir*, many words are being put in Mr. Bouchard's mouth after the fact. In addition, must we remind our friends opposite, who can have a short memory at times, that Mr. Bouchard has since found out that the federal system does not work and never will? He has had the courage of his convictions and left the party. That too should be pointed out.

In a speech given on November 3, 1989, the Leader of the Opposition said that the governments should take note of the three realities dictated by the very nature of environmental problems to be resolved. About the second reality, he said—and I am repeating the quote from my colleague from Laurentides because it is very important to understand this—that in grey areas, where the roles were not clearly defined in the Constitution, co-operation was essential. He added that, at a time when we were realizing that fighting for the environment is fighting

for life itself and that this fight must be taken up worldwide and not be limited to our individual jurisdictions, our fellow citizens would not understand and even less tolerate a wrestling match between federal and provincial politicians.

This certainly puts matters in perspective, I would say. Clearly, the federal government approach was not in keeping with the spirit of the bill. In addition, the legislation introduced today incorporates major amendments which are in line with the bill the Leader of the Opposition introduced five years ago, in 1989. The legislative committee to which the bill was referred made some very substantial changes to it in December 1991, and several technical changes were made to the legislation between December 1991 and June 1992. It is therefore inappropriate to present this bill as coming from the Leader of the Opposition. Much water has flowed under the bridge since then.

In conclusion, the only consequence of this bill will be, once again, to foster duplication under our federal system. Quebecers rose up and unanimously expressed their dissatisfaction through all the means at their disposal, but the federal government, again, did not listen to them.

Even federalists recognized the absurdity of putting in place a second review panel, but no one listened to them. Even during negotiations to harmonize federal and provincial efforts in this area, the federal government seized the first opportunity to reject Quebec's demands. It is bad faith, pure and simple.

We are constantly being reminded that it is a red book promise. The government failed to deliver on many of the environmental commitments in the red book. Fortunately, the Liberal Party recognized the foolishness of appointing an auditor for sustainable development and the environment as promised in the red book and was smart enough to put forward the recommendations included in the Bloc Québécois's minority report.

As for the goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 20 per cent by the year 2000, it was disavowed by the minister herself. She could not or would not understand that an environmental goal placed under the responsibility of another department—in this case, Energy Canada—was totally inconsistent.

As far as the environment is concerned, the Liberals would undoubtedly like to see some pages of the red book disappear, probably through recycling.

**Mr. Patrick Gagnon (Parliamentary Secretary to Solicitor General, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I listened very carefully to what the Opposition said, including that member and the critic, or the one who has the critic's role—she criticizes the Department of the Environment very badly for its efforts to serve all Canadians so that they can live in a healthier environment.



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Again, all I heard was ideological ranting about the arrogance of wanting to take Quebec's place in the environmental field.

(1625)

They talk about provocation, contempt and arrogance towards Quebec. They even talk about a kind of domineering, totalitarian federalism. You know, those are not solutions, that is not a constructive approach for finding environmental solutions. As we know very well, Quebecers are perfectly aware that pollution knows no boundaries. Everything that happens in the Great Lakes, in the St. Lawrence River and even in the Gulf concerns Quebec, although some of these places are outside the province.

I believe that Quebec and Quebecers recognize the importance of finding a common position with the provinces and countries that occupy North America, namely Mexico, Canada and the United States. It is false for the member to claim that he is defending Quebec's interests and that he speaks for Quebec. Some people on this side of the House represent Quebec ridings, including myself and many Liberal members, and I can tell you that we care a great deal for the environment.

I can prove that we Liberals were the ones who dealt with the *Irving Whale* and thanks to the close co-operation of my colleagues from the Maritimes, the Department of the Environment and the minister, who is from Ontario, we were able to solve this problem once and for all.

I still find it strange for them to say that the federal government does not consider the legitimate demands of Quebec, or of its governments. I find it curious that they refer to the people to make a distinction: They talk about the people, the governments and the Bloc Québécois' headquarters in Quebec City, but they do not necessarily discuss the issues which really concern the population. And I find it particularly strange that no mention is made of existing administrative agreements between the federal government and the province of Quebec in the pulp and paper sector.

Such an agreement was signed in August, to ensure that pulp and paper companies comply with environmental standards not only in Quebec but also across the country. I believe that success will largely depend on our way of doing things, on a co-operative approach between the provinces and with the United States and Mexico, to ensure standards which will be beneficial to Quebecers but also to every Canadian. In fact, Quebec relies on a Canadian policy to ensure a sound environment for the benefit of its current population as well as its future generations.

**Mr. Sauvageau:** Mr. Speaker, what is the question? This is certainly a nice speech. I congratulate the hon. member. I would like to know where the members for Outremont and Bonaventure—Îles-de-la-Madeleine were when the time came to speak

for Quebec regarding a debt of \$34 million owed to the province by their government.

As I recall, they applauded when their Prime Minister and leader said: "We will not give you that money back". And they were disappointed when the debt was paid to Quebec. That was certainly not the issue.

If pollution knows no borders and if Quebec should not get involved, then why should Canada? Let the United States look after the pollution problem.

I do not really understand that argument which they keep repeating to us, namely that pollution knows no borders. They say Quebec should not get involved because pollution knows no borders. Canada should not look after that problem for the same reason. This argument is somewhat fallacious and it is not very solid. I invite the hon. member to attend the meetings of the Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development. He will learn a lot.

As regards the pulp and paper sector, an administrative agreement was indeed signed. Our committee met officials from pulp and paper companies. These people do not know all the details yet. The reports do not clearly define how harmonization will proceed. Some consultations have taken place, but no tax agreement was signed and that issue is also not clear. This is my answer to the hon. member. If he has any other questions, I will be pleased to answer them.

[English]

**Mr. Morris Bodnar (Saskatoon—Dundurn, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member has indicated how horrible the legislation seems to be.

(1630)

I am wondering if the hon. member can indicate why his leader said on May 11, 1990 in the *Calgary Herald*: "People must not expect the government to get out of the assessment of federal projects". Then he went on in May 1990 in the *Calgary Sun* to say: "We have jurisdiction, we have responsibilities". Most important, the hon. member's leader said on May 11, 1990 in the *Edmonton Sun*: "I think it is a very profound responsibility of this government and any federal government to fulfil national responsibility, and environment is very much a national responsibility".

I am wondering if the hon. member has any comments in light of these statements.

[Translation]

**Mr. Sauvageau:** Mr. Speaker, these statements attributed to my leader concern the environment in general and not the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act. To be able to analyze or answer a clear question, one must compare oranges and oranges. The member quotes statements made by the Leader of the Bloc Québécois when he was environment minister and

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spoke in general terms about ecology and the environment. I do agree with my leader, as I often if not always do, that environment is a national issue, an international issue, an issue for everyone of us to consider.

Liberal members say that they are very concerned about the environment. Obviously, they are and so are, I am convinced, the NDP members, and the Reform members. We are too. But that is not the question.

The question is this: When dealing with environmental assessment and standards, should Quebec's jurisdiction be respected as agreed after the Constitution, since there is nothing about it in either the 1867 Constitution or the patriated one? I believe that we should respect the areas of jurisdiction which were defined later on.

I also believe that environmental assessment, as Quebec has been proving for a long time, and as the Liberal government in Quebec voted unanimously, should be Quebec's exclusive jurisdiction.

[English]

**Mr. Dennis J. Mills (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Industry, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have a very short question. Imagine that the Government of Canada has a national standard on the environment, say for forestry, but the provincial standard is not as high as the national standard. Which one would the member suggest be followed?

[Translation]

**Mr. Sauvageau:** Mr. Speaker, I think that forestry is a provincial responsibility, like natural resources, education—

**Mr. Mills (Broadview—Greenwood):** Standards.

**Mr. Sauvageau:** Provincial standards are generally higher than federal standards. The highest standard would then apply.

[English]

**Mr. Randy White (Fraser Valley West, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, further to my colleague's question, I do not think it was answered.

I would like to pose that question once again, asking about specific standards particularly in federal-provincial agreements. Could the hon. member indicate whether or not a standard which is lower in Quebec is the standard that would apply, or if it would be the federal standard if it were higher?

The reason I am asking the question is that I think we have to differentiate what the issue is. A separatist is basically suggesting that we will accept a lower standard if it is for Quebec, rather than a higher standard if it was in the national interest. I would like to know.

[Translation]

**Mr. Sauvageau:** Mr. Speaker, I will try to answer my two colleagues for the second time. I believe there are national standards, uniform standards for the whole country. Mr. Parizeau was saying during the election campaign that it would be very difficult to have uniform standards in Quebec, in forestry for example, so imagine what it would be like for the whole country.

First, as I said before, under the Constitution Act of 1867, forestry is strictly a provincial matter. Then, there is no problem. Second, a solution applicable in Vancouver might not work in Quebec, not to mention Prince Edward Island. If a standard applies to British Columbia—your area I believe—I do not think we can conclude that it would automatically apply to Quebec where the climate is different, the soil is different, many conditions are different. How would the standard apply?

(1635)

If you were to ask me about fisheries, I would give you the same answer. I do not think that a national standard could apply to conditions in Quebec, or in Alberta, or in your riding, differences are too large.

[English]

**Hon. Charles Caccia (Davenport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the Minister of the Environment for introducing these amendments today which are in keeping with the promise made in the red book. I would like to make some brief comments on the interventions by the member for Laurentides when she spoke after the minister today.

The hon. member started her analysis by referring to the fact that the bill being introduced today which amends the existing legislation and the existing legislation have no resemblance with the original bill known as Bill C-78 that was introduced when the present leader of the Bloc Québécois was Minister of the Environment. She added that some 150 amendments were made during the lifetime of that bill before it was proclaimed. That statement is quite accurate; I was here and she was not. I remember very well that a number of amendments were made having been proposed by representatives of the NDP, the Conservative Party and my party.

In that process of amending it we did what is done with any major legislation, namely we improved it. We improved it within the limits imposed by the bill itself. Therefore that bill, known as Bill C-78 and subsequently as Bill C-13, has the thrust, the scope and the four corners, to use the parliamentary language, that the original bill had. In that respect the member for Laurentides unfortunately is wrong.

The hon. member objected to the fact that the final legislation introduced the term and definition of sustainable development. In evolving time considering the progress that term has made in its interpretation it has become natural and almost obvious that sustainable development was introduced as one of the objectives

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of that legislation. I am sure that if the then Minister of the Environment and now leader of the Bloc Québécois had been in the position of the present Minister of the Environment, he would have proposed the definition to be inserted in the bill himself. It goes without saying.

The member for Laurentides went on to say that fellow citizens will not tolerate quibbling between federal and provincial politicians. Having made that statement with which we all agree she then devoted the rest of her speech to an analysis of the situation which revealed a profound desire to disagree with the federal jurisdiction as if she were a provincial politician. She even brought into the discussion a judgment of the Supreme Court in order to make her case.

She was repeatedly dissatisfied or annoyed at the fact that the present Minister of the Environment in her speech today was referring frequently to her leader, as if that were a sign of lack of respect for his present political role, having changed sides, so to say.

(1640)

Of course, the hon. member indicated several times that her main concern in relation to the bill introduced today is one that she would interpret to perform a role that would be tantamount to an arrogant attempt to encroach on Quebec's jurisdiction. We are not aware of any other province interpreting this bill in that manner. Actually this bill is supported by and large by provinces. No one has seen this bill as an arrogant encroachment.

What the member for Laurentides failed to recognize in her speech is that if the federal government wanted to encroach on the jurisdiction of any province it could do so under the provision of peace, order and good government. It could intervene anytime but it does not. That is the point. It does not do so because there is an unwritten understanding that the peace, order and good government clause is to be used only in extreme cases when necessity makes it absolutely unavoidable but only in such cases.

Therefore to proclaim to the world that this bill is an encroachment on Quebec's jurisdiction is sheer nonsense. There is air, water and a variety of natural resources that all levels of government share in the name of the Canadian people. No province is exempt from that. Neither is the federal government exempt from that basic sense of accountability in relation to these natural resources.

The member for Laurentides went on to say that this bill is a demonstration of the centralizing vision of the federal government. I invite any member of the Bloc Québécois to get up in this House and support this statement.

The member for Laurentides went on to say that national standards are being imposed. Tell us which national standards are being imposed. We are searching for national standards. The exchange of questions with the member for Fraser Valley West already showed how much of an openness of mind there is in the search for national standards. It is a very difficult exercise. It is much more complex than the wall to wall standardization to which the member for Terrebonne referred in his reply. It is a difficult exercise, no doubt.

The hon. member went on to say that Ottawa could force any Quebec project to come under assessment. This is stretching it a bit too far. As I said earlier, Ottawa could do that without this bill under peace, order and good government if it really wanted to but it does not do so. To claim that is a political expedient in this House to unnecessarily whip up feelings among constituents in Quebec.

The hon. member went on to quote a distinguished but unknown lawyer in Quebec commenting on this legislation. It is not difficult these days to find lawyers to comment one way or another on any piece of legislation. Then she went on to put on record an editorial by a writer well known for her objectivity, Lise Bissonnette of *Le Devoir*. Apparently she has written that Ottawa is taking over Quebec's energy policy by means of this legislation. How absurd can one be? How can one make that statement seriously? We must bring this debate down to earth and analyse the legislation for what it is and what it attempts to do.

(1645)

In a flight of desperation, the member for Laurentides announced to the world that the federal government is attempting to squash economic development in Quebec. At that point I had a moment of dismay because I thought it was a very unfortunate statement on the part of the critic for the environment for the Bloc Québécois. At that point she revealed that she was not speaking as critic for the environment. She was speaking perhaps as a political person instructed to demonstrate that federal-provincial relations a priori cannot work in this country.

However, if she were critic for the environment she would have not let her guard down and allowed herself to be accused of seeing the economy as separate from the environment as she did with her statement. She should know better.

We have reached the conclusion in this Chamber, in all the parties represented in this House, in their contained literature, at the OECD in Paris and in Rio in 1992 that there is a strong link between the environment and the economy. In some quarters the economic thinking has gone even so far as to say that there is no economy without the environment, although that vision has not

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yet become official in those institutions and agencies. However, we are moving in that direction inevitably so.

For the official critic for the environment for the Bloc Quebecois to make a statement in which she dissociates the economy from the environment I thought was very unfortunate. She talked like an old-fashioned economist, an economist of 100 years ago perhaps, not as a critic for the environment, not as a politician who understands the importance of integrating the economy with the environment, not as a politician who understands that in the end the environment is the first and major consideration if we want to have a healthy economy.

The speech by the member for Laurentides, I am afraid to say, reveals a profound and serious conceptual weakness.

To conclude on that intervention, I found in essence the speech really was activating the flames of confrontational federalism instead of searching for the answers through a form of co-operative federalism which was done I thought so effectively by many other speakers today and in particular by the member for Comox—Alberni whose intervention I found extremely helpful. We may perhaps have different political views but his intervention in outlining where he finds the bill weak and where he finds agreement with the bill is extremely helpful. I thank him for that.

He asked a very key question which was dealt with briefly but I would like to go over it for a moment. His question was what if—one of those famous what ifs—the minister does not call for a review and there is too much ministerial discretion? That is certainly a point that we have to examine and to which the parliamentary secretary gave an interesting answer. He said he believed that in such a case there would probably be profound public displeasure, profound public and media criticism and that would be the corrective action that would take place.

(1650)

It is a very legitimate question to ask. It falls perfectly within the classic jurisdiction of the opposition to do so. I certainly find that question worth pursuing in search of a desirable satisfactory answer.

Another question by the hon. member for Comox—Alberni was how the bill would apply to the First Nations. He wants clarification on that aspect and we will certainly seek it.

In essence it seems that this bill is serving the agenda of the Bloc Quebecois in terms of demonstrating that federalism does not work because of certain actions taken by Ottawa. That is a very regrettable political line to adopt. It is unfortunate and it is not in the interest of Canadians no matter where they live.

If we were to assume just for a moment that Quebec were sovereign, it would be the government of Quebec that would be seeking from its neighbours the type of environmental security

and understanding and processes that this bill and the legislation which this bill intends to amend is offering right now. It would be one of the first steps of any new government. It is difficult to understand the logic of the Bloc Quebecois in criticizing a bill that is already in place, to which improvements are being made, to an unacceptable measure under federalism but which it would be pursuing and very actively so if it was sovereign in the sense it is pursuing it at the present time.

There is a contradiction here which does not make sense and which I would like to bring to your attention, Mr. Speaker, because it seems that it goes to the root of the debate today on Bill C-56.

Mr. Speaker, I see you are giving me the signal that my time is up. I thank you for your consideration.

**Mr. Len Taylor (The Battlefords—Meadow Lake, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the member for Davenport having just spoken I was very pleased to be here today to be able to hear his words. I have a great deal of respect for the member for Davenport with whom I shared a fair bit of time in committee looking at Bill C-13, the legislation which preceded that which we are amending today.

I have a couple of questions based on his comments just now. The member indicated quite correctly as I see it some of the questions which must be asked about the speech by the member for the Bloc Quebecois earlier today. In one of those comments on one of those points, the hon. member for Davenport talked about C-13 and the way in which it applies in the joint panels, the jurisdiction issue.

Could the member for Davenport explain a little bit further this whole aspect about the trigger mechanism that puts in place the joint panels. Could he give, as a member from Quebec, any examples at all of where those triggers would interfere with Quebec jurisdiction. It is my feeling that the triggers quite properly represent federal jurisdiction and perhaps there are no provincial jurisdiction issues to be dealt with here. I would like to know what the hon. member has to say about that.

(1655)

Second, in his remarks he talked about the peace, order and good government matter. If I am not mistaken, the member for Davenport can correct me if I am, in the committee studying Bill C-13 we tried to amend the act to put in a peace, order and good government clause but failed to do so.

I believe the peace, order and good government clause he is referring to exists elsewhere. I wonder if under those circumstances he would be supportive of looking at the amendment in committee regarding peace, order and good government specific to this legislation.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger):** Before I recognize the hon. member for Davenport I have a housekeeping matter here.

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It is my duty, pursuant to Standing order 38 to inform the House that the question to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment is as follows: the hon. member for Davenport—Nuclear testing.

**Mr. Caccia:** Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for The Battlefords—Meadow Lake for his question. Regarding peace, order and good government I would not recommend that this amendment be put in the legislation at this particular point in time. I think it would become the object of incredibly acrimonious debates and could endanger the entire exercise. It is better that that provision remain where it is now and that it be invoked as sparingly as possible. It should be therefore considered as an item that would not be invoked in single legislation as in the case of Bill C-13.

Regarding the trigger mechanism, I have extreme difficulties in answering that question. I would also like to know where that mechanism ought to be placed and when it ought to be put into motion. It is more than a technical question; it is a very important political question. I would like to study that matter in more depth before trying to give an adequate answer.

I am sure the hon. member with his political and legal knowledge has one in his pocket. I would rather look at his before I make up my mind.

**Mr. Taylor:** Mr. Speaker, not wishing to abuse the House time but wanting the full benefit of the member's experience, I thought I might also ask a question in relation to the specific amendments in front of us, particularly the amendment dealing with intervener funding.

When we sat together on committee in the previous Parliament, the hon. member for Davenport was quite supportive of intervener funding and in fact had some very specific comments about how to put intervener funding into place.

Given the vagueness of the intervener funding amendment in front of us today, would the member be willing to consider supporting a much broader and perhaps more detailed amendment specific to intervener funding?

**Mr. Caccia:** Mr. Speaker, there is a well-established rule that a chair of a committee should play as impartial a role as possible. Not only that, but the chair should not take a route or a position before an analysis and examination of a bill takes place in committee. The member for Davenport happens to be the chair of the committee on the environment and sustainable development. It really would not be appropriate to indicate what he would entertain or support, considering the fact that in most cases the decision is made by the members with the chair abstaining.

(1700)

I am sure the government, having introduced this amendment, will be willing to look at any positive contributions made in order to make the legislation more effective.

I would like to give that assurance to the member for The Battlefords—Meadow Lake.

**Mr. Randy White (Fraser Valley West, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to speak to this bill today.

I must compliment the chair of the environmental committee, the hon. member for Davenport, who has an outstanding reputation of being fair and quite articulate on this issue. He did make a comment about serving the agenda of the Bloc. I do not know how one can get away from that agenda. I guess they are just going to call it the way they want and regardless of whether the issue is in the national interest of Canadians, we are going to get it from them as far as the separatist agenda is concerned.

I suppose what we have today is a party of good intentions here with the Liberals and a party of "what's in it for me" from the separatists. That is truly unfortunate when it comes to the environment.

The member for Comox—Alberni, who is our critic for the environment, raised some very good questions—they were addressed by the member for Davenport—about some precautions that should be taken in a bill such as this. Precautions such as, how do the aboriginal peoples fit into this? Do they come under this umbrella? I certainly hope they do. What kind of costs will be involved in assessments? I realize we are cost conscious. I am sure the government will keep that in mind and the idea of a single track, the division of responsibility.

In my previous job, doing a lot of construction in the hundreds of millions of dollars, our biggest problem was duplicity of roles with federal fisheries, for instance. It was really a nightmare when you are trying to develop projects in the \$20 million range, trying to deal with federal and provincial fisheries and every other bureaucrat who can get involved in these things. They tend to just look at the words that are written down in black and white and overlook the fact that there are some very good projects out there. They tend to be, I think, overly protective and in some cases overly pushy.

Rather than just push one way, the environment is a two-way street. It is something we have to keep in mind.

We support Bill C-56 and I am glad to speak to that support. I do not often get to say this to the Liberal government, but it has come a fair distance to the way our party thinks. It is quite easy to stand here and talk about the failures in the criminal justice system, immigration and finance. However, you have to give credit where credit is due and it is due here today.

Why should we not support such an environmental bill? Canada's identity should be rooted in a fresh appreciation for our land. We have gone too long without a renewal of our appreciation for our land. A lot of things that happen today, the garbage that is strewn throughout our countryside, shows that we need a fresh appreciation of things. That applies to young people as much as to business people today. More often than not

a project must be developed and built and environmental impacts are overlooked. Our vision for the future is inspired by the importance of our well-being, of exploring, developing, renewing and conserving our environment. We have to leave our young people with something. We have to leave them with a good, clean environment and that is where this bill comes in. We also have to leave them with a little of their pay cheque, which the government has not got into its mind set yet but we will get it there eventually. Meanwhile the government is coming along on the environment so we will applaud it for that.

(1705)

We strongly support ensuring that all Canadians and their descendants live in a clean and healthy environment. I suppose we all do that, notwithstanding political agendas, with the exception of this separatist body here from which I am hearing that there are almost two standards; a federal standard and a Quebec standard. If the federal standard is higher than the Quebec standard, this group seems to think that it is okay, we'll go to the lower standard, as long as it is in their best interests. That is not good enough today in Canada.

We must have the concept of public education programs, of environmentally conscious purchasing. The federal government should take a leadership role in environmentally conscious purchasing while encouraging the private sector to follow.

I do not know how easy this is going to be for the federal government. In the organization that I was in before I tried environmental purchasing. One of the biggest problems was getting suppliers to give you some environmentally sound products. They do not produce them in bulk. When the federal government goes—heaven only knows how much paper this place uses—to get environmentally conscious products it may be difficult. However the federal government has an obligation to push in that direction.

We must buy into the principle of sustainable development, which balances the need for a healthy environment with the continued growth and progress of Canada's economy.

Sustainable development can be defined as meeting the needs of the present without compromising our ability to meet the needs of the future. "Environmental considerations must carry equal weight with the economic, social and technical considerations of a project". This is a big statement. The government should really look at this as one of the main principles of the environment. Because in most projects, regardless of whether they are a \$30,000 project or a \$10 million or \$20 million project, what gets lost oftentimes because you are trying to cut costs is the environmental consideration. Somewhere along the

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line we have to look at it as having equal weight with the economic, social and technical considerations.

I would like the Liberal government to consider that very carefully.

We must see the integration of environmental and economic objectives in all areas of management in which the federal government has jurisdiction. We must support the integration of energy development and environmental conservation by ensuring that the cost of energy development includes the associated costs of environmental protection and by supporting conservation of energy and the development of alternative energy sources for the purposes of environmental protection.

We all know that we have to establish clear federal-provincial jurisdiction over environmental matters to reduce duplication, confusion and unnecessary regulations. We also have to promote partnerships with provincial governments, private industry and educational institutions and the public to promote environmental protection.

Our greatest resource today is sitting in high schools and elementary schools. I have been in that business at one time or another and very little of a sustainable, consistent curriculum on the environment is put forward. A lot of schools go out on field trips and they talk about it, but it is not really a consistent issue with our young people. That is where we have to start. Our young people will be the developers of tomorrow and they will be the ones who will come under the umbrella of these assessments that will be made under this act.

(1710)

We support the development of environmental regulations through consultation of industry and the public. We must support the multi-partite round table approach as a means of finding common ground when developing environmental measures.

Multi-party round table approaches will work if the issue is important enough to all parties. We do try. We have seen the attempt to get the health round table discussions going. It is not working. The provinces are opting out. A lot of it has to do with the fact that the federal government is not offering enough to the provinces in the partnership. In the environment we all have an equal role. A lot of it is not necessarily money. It is articulation. It is experience.

We should make government sponsored research available to the private sector. I emphasize the private sector. Once we get it into the public sector we are back again to all of these grants on which governments, Liberal and Conservative, year after year have made mistakes. They tend to become patronage pots.

If we can just let the private sector lead, they will come up with better, higher quality environmental impact assessments than will governments. We sometimes fall into the pit and think that only governments can do a good job. That really is not so.

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**An hon. member:** And post offices.

**Mr. White (Fraser Valley West):** And post offices, yes.

We must support industrial research and development so that in the future emissions from industry will be subject to controls, such that water discharged from industrial plants will be equal or better quality than the water taken into the plant for its use and gaseous emissions will not be harmful.

Can you imagine having a standard, a principle that high, that the water going out of plants will be of just as high a quality as the water going into plants? That is amazing. Those are tough measures. Those are the standards that we have to set up here. These are the federal standards that my colleague from Davenport was talking about a little while ago.

If we set the federal standards this high and if those of a province are lower, I think most provinces would try to get up to the higher standard, notwithstanding the separatist agenda.

We must support the restoration of programs for those parts of our environment which have been damaged as a result of inadequate regulations or a lack of proper enforcement of the regulations.

This party supports the principle that polluters shall pay for its pollution controls. This should be stringently enforced and the penalties will be severe enough that polluters will not consider them as a licence fee to pollute.

A lot of what I just talked about are principles or guidelines to which the Reform Party adheres. They are not necessarily coming from me but I ascribe to all of them. A lot of these principles that we have fit into where the government is going. That is nice to see.

There are four types of environmental assessments which have been covered to some extent. I want to review them for the folks that are listening and watching and so everyone understands. We have a screening process to assess projects. Then we get a comprehensive study. These are incremental. The screening process is basically for smaller projects. Then we move to a comprehensive study, then to mediation if required and then to a review by an independent public panel.

I have negotiated many labour agreements in my day. I have been in many mediation exercises. I know that is probably the best solution when we run into problems rather than ending up with a black and white issue where the parties are win-lose. Both parties can win in mediation. I commend the government for coming up with mediation. Let us hope it works.

I want to speak for a few minutes about my concern of where the environment is going. That hits home for me as it affects the folks of Matsqui, Aldergrove and Abbotsford in my riding in the Fraser Valley in terms of air quality. The brown scourge that sits over the Fraser Valley today from emissions from Vancouver is not only concerning but downright scary.

(1715)

If we walk out into the backyards of my home or any of the homes in Fraser Valley and run our fingers across a white table that has been outside for two or three days, there is black pitch coming from the skies. There are diseases. There are effects.

We are looking at the assessment of new projects coming into the country. The government has to take some concrete action on some old things that are kicking around. Air quality is one of considerable importance to the Fraser Valley. It is not addressed here, that I am aware of.

I have a word for the wise. The government should not forget those things that exist and just think that Canadians will say: "You have a good bill here". It affects all things that might happen in the future. There are things in existence such as air quality and water quality in the Fraser Valley that are deteriorating substantially.

I am going to use my remaining three minutes on what is wrong in the Fraser Valley. I hope it will influence the Liberal government and maybe get it to move a little better than it has on other issues such as immigration, finances and the criminal justice system. I always have to remind government members of that because they forget so easily over there. Here are comments that have come out of some in depth studies: "environmental agencies are urging lower mainland residents to minimize the use of their cars until smog levels drop".

Can we imagine in Canada today that the lower mainland of British Columbia is getting like Los Angeles? It is hard to believe. When I moved there in 1981 Mount Baker could be seen as a pristine white mountain. It could be seen very clearly. Now on any day there is a brown scourge there. People are afraid.

"The unprecedented request, the first in B.C. since the regional, provincial and federal governments set up a warning system in June, came Thursday as another hot sunny day and a layer of warm air trapped air pollutants over the Fraser Valley".

It is ironic, is it not, that the federal and provincial governments set up a warning system about air quality? I am here to tell the government that we are not interested in warning systems. We are interested in repair, in fixing the problem. It is useless to warn residents that the air quality is poor. We want the problem fixed.

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A new public health study suggests that lower mainland residents are getting sick and even dying from air pollution. The study is part of an unprecedented \$10 million. It is yet another study, by the way. A multi-disciplinary research effort in the Fraser Valley last summer looked at what happened to the lungs of 58 farm workers from Matsqui and Abbotsford who worked long hours outdoors. That is when pollutants from tailpipes and smokestacks combine in sunlight to form a powerful lung irritant called ground level ozone pollution, the same smog that plagues car choked Los Angeles.

I could go on but I see my time is running out. It is important to emphasize to government that while the bill addresses the new projects, and that is great, there is a bigger responsibility. There are a lot of pollutants. There are a lot of things that must be addressed that exist today in Canada. I ask the government to look at those as well.

**Hon. Charles Caccia (Davenport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for Fraser Valley West for his support for the bill before us today. I would like to inform him that the Standing Committee on the Environment and Sustainable Development will be in his part of the world one month from now. We will be holding public hearings in Vancouver on December 1, 2 and 3. At the urging of his hon. colleague, the member for Comox—Alberni, we will be examining some of the issues that he raised in the House this afternoon, particularly the condition of water in the Fraser Valley River estuary. If there is a link between the condition of air quality, the smog that he referred to and the chemicals that are emitted into the atmosphere by various activities in his region, we will have an opportunity to look at that as well.

(1720)

The Liberal administration in Parliament is certainly moving swiftly along the track that he is recommending this afternoon.

**Mr. White (Fraser Valley West):** Mr. Speaker, that is good news. I would suggest the committee has its hearings outside and breathe a little of the unfiltered air. Maybe that will move it on a bit. Perhaps the committee might even want to bring one of the Bloc members to see that other parts of Canada have similar problems to those in Quebec.

I have another point. The regulations by which we all live, the law or the legislation, are being changed. I trust members of the group that is coming to the Fraser Valley will enlist comments from ordinary residents and get a bit away from the lobby groups. I understand that is important, but they also need to talk to the people who own the houses that are dirty now. They need to talk to the people who are affected, such as farmers. They need to talk to the people who drink that rotten water out there with the nitrates in it.

They really should not surface scratch the issue. They have to go a little deeper and get down to where the problems really are. I hope this is not just another cursory discussion in a community. I will be there and I will be asking some questions along with a whole bunch of regular folk.

**Mr. Paul DeVillers (Simcoe North, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my question for the member concerns his comments about yet another study. It is a refrain that we frequently hear from members of his party. Yet when he is advised a committee would be going to his riding he seems to be quite supportive. I wonder if he could explain the inconsistency in that approach for us.

**Mr. White (Fraser Valley West):** Mr. Speaker, I cannot stop the government from undertaking timely and wasteful studies. I doubt very much whether it even looked at the Conservative studies that were undertaken on the matter before.

There is no question about how much money the government wastes. If I am stuck with a group coming in to talk, I am stuck with it. This is a majority government and we cannot stop it. However I can tell the member that when he comes to the town where I live there will be people asking questions. The government is going to get its dollars worth out of our town because we have a lot to say.

They spend a lot of money over there on studies, grants and whatnot, but this time they will earn their money when they come to our town.

**Mr. Len Taylor (The Battlefords—Meadow Lake, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I have a couple questions which I will put individually to the hon. member.

I was quite pleased to hear that he and his party support the principle of polluter pay. It is something that I have supported for quite some time. It was refreshing to hear that the hon. member supports the concept as well.

I am wondering, given his respect for the Criminal Code, if he is prepared to take the issue of polluter pay one step further. There has been talk over the years of adding crimes against the environment as a new section of the Criminal Code and applying Criminal Code type penalties and approaches to crimes against the environment. I am wondering if the member would also support that principle.

(1725)

**Mr. White (Fraser Valley West):** Mr. Speaker, actually it is Reform Party policy that we would go further than fines for polluters. I am not sure at this point how far in the Criminal Code we would take it. I am sure it is going to be a subject for debate within our own party.

The fact is that fines to major corporations make about as much sense at times as the fines given to drug pushers. Many drug pushers today get \$2,000 fines. They turn around and go out and sell whatever they are selling, heroin or crack. They



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make that in 20 minutes or less. If we look at that in the context of a corporation making multimillions of dollars, to fine them small \$2,000 or \$3,000 fines is a waste of time.

There has to be a better way, and I think the better way is through other kinds of penalties. It is not only part of our policy. We will be looking at it in depth as soon as we become government in three years.

**Mr. Taylor:** Mr. Speaker, in response to the member's earlier comments about the Fraser Valley and air quality, I am wondering if he has opinions about other issues, that perhaps a federal environmental assessment could be done in relation to the Alcan project in British Columbia or the Clayoquot Sound issue in British Columbia. Are these also issues on which the member believes a federal environmental assessment process could be entertained?

**Mr. White (Fraser Valley West):** Mr. Speaker, somebody over there said I have an opinion on everything; they are probably right.

The assessment of projects, if I have the question right, is applicable to virtually all projects, big or small. Kemano is a good example and that is being undertaken now of course. I do not think it is not the size of the project. I think it is the effect the project may have on our environment.

I think I have answered the question. I am not quite sure. I will leave it at that.

[Translation]

**Mr. Martin Cauchon (Outremont, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am especially happy today to join the Minister of the Environment in speaking to Bill C-56, an Act to amend the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act.

I think that in analyzing this bill, we must pay close attention to the actions of Opposition members, particularly members of the Official Opposition. In addressing environmental assessments, the Bloc Quebecois clearly showed that its mandate has nothing to do with protecting Quebecers' interests. In fact, the Bloc stubbornly criticizes the proclamation of the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, which was designed by its own leader. These actions confirm that the only goal of the Official Opposition, the Bloc Quebecois, is to look after the interests of Quebec's separatist government.

As the leader of the Bloc has often said, the environment has no borders. In an interview published in the October 13 edition of *The Gazette*, the hon. member who is the leader of the Bloc Quebecois said this in English:

[English]

The problem is that the word environment never appears in the Constitution so the provinces and the federal government are

condemned to work jointly. They have to work together. If they do not it is chaos.

(1730)

[Translation]

All levels of government share a great and noble responsibility with regard to the environment. All levels of government in Canada have a responsibility to ensure that development is carried out in a rational way while at the same time respecting the natural balance.

It is clear that Canadians want jobs, but not at the expense of their children or the environment. Of all the tools available to protect the environment, the environmental assessment is undoubtedly the most effective. In fact, environmental assessment is inexpensive preventive medicine. It gives us advance warning of the possible environmental impact of a project and it promotes informed public participation in the decision-making process.

If members of this House agree that environmental jurisdiction is shared and that environmental assessment is a good way to prevent pollution, how can we explain that some members opposite stubbornly insist on condemning the proclamation of this bill? Let us briefly look together at the so-called problems raised by the Bloc's environment critic.

When the Minister of the Environment on October 6 announced the government's decision to proclaim the law, the Bloc critic condemned this as a federal attempt to interfere in provincial jurisdiction. Of course, such reaction from the Bloc Quebecois is quite natural. I must say that I was stupefied when I heard those remarks about Bill C-56.

In fact, what Bill C-56 does is exactly the opposite of what the Bloc is again trying to have all Quebecers believe. If the federal government wanted to meddle in provincial affairs or make things difficult for Quebec by interfering with its economic development, it would not propose the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act. It would keep the famous 1984 EARP Guidelines Order and it would use it systematically.

Why? Because that order allows the federal government to examine the environmental impact of any proposal over which it has a decision-making power. Do you know how the term "proposal" is defined in the order? It is described as any undertaking or activity over which the government has a say in the decision process.

In concrete terms, this means every project, activity and initiative in which the federal government is involved. It also includes all direct and indirect subsidies to provinces, including equalization payments, as well as every Canada-Quebec agreement on regional development, and all federal subsidies to businesses. That definition also includes hundreds of licences, permits and authorizations delivered every day by the federal government.

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When he was Canada's Minister of the Environment, the Bloc Québécois leader did read the EARP Guidelines Order. He also read the Supreme Court decisions and he quickly realized that if the order were to be applied like an act, as instructed by the courts, the federal government would find itself in an impossible situation. This is why he demanded that a reform be implemented as quickly as possible. I must admit that the Bloc critic did a nice song and dance. She said that the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act was unacceptable because it differs from Bill C-78 which, as you remember, had been submitted to Cabinet by the member for Lac-Saint-Jean just a few days before his sudden resignation from the Conservative government.

(1735)

For once, the Bloc critic is partially right when she talks about differences. Dozens of amendments were proposed by the House of Commons committee and by the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment, which represents the interests of all the provinces regarding environmental issues.

Let us examine the main amendments together briefly. First of all, approximately ten changes to the Bouchard bill were meant to facilitate the alignment of the federal and the provincial processes. Thus, the Minister of the Environment is now required to consult the provinces and to co-operate with them before any review panel is formed. Other amendments give the federal authorities the power to delegate to the provinces the preliminary reviews, the in-depth studies, the mitigation measures and even the follow-up programs.

Therefore, what we have here is a possible delegation of most of the environmental assessments done by the federal government. Some other changes promote public participation. Several clauses were added to restrain the discretion formerly afforded the federal authorities.

The Bouchard bill was amended so that the uncertainties about the implementation of the legislation would be reduced, including in the area of federal activities. But the preamble of that bill was changed to include the concept of sustainable development.

Therefore, the Bloc critic is right. The Bouchard bill was amended in several important ways. I would like her to say, for the benefit of the House, what amendments are rejected by her party. In fact, all of the amendments to this famous bill we just saw and reviewed are consistent with the vision of this government, a vision where the objective is to make sure we can act according to the present policy, based first and foremost on a progressive federalism.

This bill means that we are going to work together with all the provinces and also with the general public, and that is what irks the Official Opposition. This bill is a prime example of how federalism can work when you believe in it. That is the problem with the Official Opposition. When they talk about federalism,

they certainly do not want this system, which is probably the best system in the world, to operate properly. That is why they say every time that if the Leader of the Bloc left the Conservative government at the time, it was because he believed and knew that the system no longer worked.

I think it is too early to throw in the towel on a system that is evolving and responding to the needs of the people. Not just in Quebec but in Canada as well, people say that federalism has problems. My answer to that is thank God federalism has problems, because this means people have changed, people have evolved, and our duty as parliamentarians at the federal level, as members of this House, is to reflect on these changes and get together to ensure that the political system under which we live, that the federal system under which we are evolving also evolves in line with the expectations of the public.

This was just a brief digression. I will get back to the bill.

(1740)

And if the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act were an attempt by the federal government to encroach on Quebec's jurisdiction, as I said earlier, let the Bloc critic explain why four successive federal Ministers of the Environment came from the Conservative Quebec caucus and were so closely involved in this reform? They designed it, tabled it in the House, made amendments, passed it and defended it during the last federal election. According to the philosophy of the Bloc Québécois, we would have to say that probably all the Quebecers who were committed to this bill were on the wrong track.

In fact, the question is: Does the Bloc have a monopoly on brains? Were these people who spoke out in favour of the bill all wrong? The answer is simple. As I said earlier, the bill is such an eloquent example of viable federalism that obviously they would be ill-advised to react positively to the bill, since these people, and I am probably repeating myself, are intent on only one thing, and that is the separation of Quebec.

Unfortunately, in the process they have lost the ability to think objectively, thereby jeopardizing the interests of all Quebecers. Well, the people who supported this bill were not all wrong. The comments of the critic for the Bloc Québécois seem to point to the presence of a transmission belt linking her office with the Quebec government's Department of Intergovernmental Affairs. The problem of the Bloc Québécois right now is that it is only a mouthpiece. We could say that it is the secretariat of the Parti Québécois. Members of the Bloc no longer have their own identity, their own way of thinking. They do not have a specific way of being, a specific philosophy. They are like puppets controlled by the government of Quebec which is following a separation agenda.

Since I am informed that time is flying, I will simply say that this bill, like many an initiative from this government, is a highly symbolic expression of dialogue. We proved in the past that when there is a will to co-operate we can progress. Let us remember, for example, the St. Lawrence—Vision 2000 project.

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This is a vibrant example of federal, provincial and municipal co-operation. Let us remember the agreements under the infrastructure program which helped renew our social infrastructure and put a number of people back to work. Recently, last June in fact, there was an agreement between the provinces to do away with economic barriers. Is it not proof that federalism works?

Clearly, this legislation is in the same vein and shows the same kind of vision. This is why members of the Official Opposition have every reason to make the people of Quebec believe that this legislation is useless and even harmful to the whole of Quebec.

In 1981, 13 years ago, the government of the Parti Québécois passed the Environment Quality Act. At the same time, it adopted regulations listing the kind of projects which would be subject to hearings by the Quebec Bureau d'audiences publiques sur l'environnement.

Unfortunately, the Quebec government forgot to proclaim certain key sections of the regulations and today, 13 years later, the Parti Québécois government's process only deals with dams, roads and marinas. There is no public assessment of industrial projects, no public assessment of mining projects and no public assessment of aluminum plants.

(1745)

I would like to conclude, if I may, Mr. Speaker, on a very important point, namely the harmonization of the federal and provincial processes. For the past several months, the members of the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment have been looking for ways to facilitate harmonization. Their objective is to agree on the implementation of the principle of one environmental assessment for each project, regardless of the number of decision-makers. It is an arduous task requiring the participation of all provinces.

Nevertheless, the Quebec environment minister recently announced that he was withdrawing his officials from the federal-provincial consultations on environmental assessment. This decision could hurt Quebec businesses as well as Quebecers looking for a job. The president of the Conseil du patronat du Québec recently condemned this hasty decision on the part of the Quebec environment minister. Other organizations are to follow suit.

To conclude, if the Bloc members want to show that they are more concerned about the interests of Quebecers than they are about their obsession to separate, they should do two things in this House. First, they should support the proclamation of the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act and the amendments proposed by the environment minister.

Second, if these people were acting reasonably and for the sake of all Quebecers, they would recognize the appropriateness of this bill for the future of Quebec, the future of Canada and the well-being of federalism. They would also have the courage to demand that the Quebec environment minister change his mind and take part again in the work of the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment on the harmonization of the environmental assessment process. This is what they would do if only they had enough courage.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger):** Before we proceed with questions and comments, the government whip has the floor on a point of order.

*[English]*

**Mr. Boudria:** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 43(2), I wish to inform you that the next speakers from the government will be sharing their time.

**Mr. Len Taylor (The Battlefords—Meadow Lake, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to put a question to the member for Outremont who I think spoke quite well on the bill and other matters. It is partly the other matters that I want to address in my opening comments before I place my question.

The debate through most of today centred around issues within the province of Quebec. With the exception of comments earlier in the day the government speakers have all represented Quebec ridings this afternoon so far, including the parliamentary secretary, the member for Davenport—I apologize, Mr. Speaker, I just realize the member for Davenport is from Ontario. I have to rephrase my question.

The comments today have centred around the jurisdiction of the province of Quebec. The member for Outremont rightly speaks for his constituents and the people of his province. I believe the question of jurisdiction while it is an important one is not the only question that we have to deal with in this House.

I had expected members of the Bloc Québécois at least in one of their speeches today as members representing the Official Opposition to raise some of the issues which are important to the rest of Canada, issues that are over and above the questions of jurisdiction.

The member for Outremont must be aware that the province of Quebec would have to participate in joint panels if this bill came into force with the amendments put forward today.

(1750)

How would the member for Outremont advise the members of his government to deal with the province of Quebec in matters where confrontation might exist over the issues of not only jurisdiction but of the joint panels that must be created under the auspices of the act?

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**Mr. Cauchon:** Mr. Speaker, I must say that this is an interesting question, one that was partially answered in my speech.

As I said, there is already a joint committee sitting at the level of all the environment ministers of all the provinces. They are all sitting in order to discuss what we are going to do about the environment in this country.

[*Translation*]

They are trying to set national standards so that we can have legislation or at least an environmental policy that will be consistent from coast to coast.

As I mentioned in my speech—

[*English*]

Unfortunately the Minister of the Environment of the province of Quebec declared weeks ago that it does not want to participate any more in that process. According to the minister it is a question of jurisdiction; the environment belongs to the provinces.

[*Translation*]

So, as I mentioned in my speech, that question has already been answered. The problem is that the Quebec Minister of the Environment refuses to participate in this process and, as I explained earlier, that is where there is a lack of objectivity. Every time we try to sit down with the government of Quebec or the Official Opposition to discuss national standards or other issues for the benefit of Quebecers and all Canadians, they refuse to take part in such discussions.

I think it is time we start telling Quebecers that the federal government is not as bad as some people would like them to believe and that the present federal government is actually very open.

This brings me to say a few words about the issue of social reform. You will understand that we cannot give these people any credibility when we have just undertaken a social reform process in which we want to consult Canadians so that they can participate in the development of a new government policy.

We are just through the first stage, which was the tabling of a discussion paper. The consultation process will follow—actually, it has already started. So we are still in the early stages of this reform and the ministers responsible in Quebec are already complaining that the federal government wants to interfere in areas under provincial jurisdiction, that the federal government is again picking on Quebec. I do not understand anything any more. If the government presents a discussion paper and wants to consult people, if this is interpreted as wanting to invade Quebec, I will have to take Politics 101 over again.

I do not understand anything any more, but it is obvious. Since the federal government wants to act openly and present a bill to reform part of our federal system, namely our social programs, they absolutely do not want to see this process succeed.

[*English*]

I must say that it is the same with the question of the environment. When we are discussing that subject, they do not want to enter into discussion with our government. They want to separate. They want to move apart so they will not be with us any more. As such it is going to be very difficult to deal with them over the next few years.

**Mr. Taylor:** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member puts a lot of stake in consultation. I applaud him for that because I believe that consulting is an important part of governing.

This bill contains just three provisions. One of those provisions is the opportunity for participation by Canadians through an intervener funding program or a participant funding program. That is a very important part of the consultation process inherent in environmental assessment.

(1755)

The amendment in front of us provides a very vague approach to participant funding. Can the member give us any indication as to whether he would be supportive of a more specific intervener funding program to ensure that there are adequate resources available to those who wish to participate in the process and those who wish to be consulted during the process of environmental assessment?

**Mr. Cauchon:** Mr. Speaker, on the question of funding for people who want to proceed and be accepted in the consultation process, we should have a look at what we are doing. Actually the minister of human resources in his consultations on social reform decided that he will proceed with some funding for organizations across Canada.

I believe that on that specific point we have to respect the discretionary power of the minister. It depends on what process we are going ahead with. If it is a huge transformation in that field against it then the discretion of the minister will be used accordingly. I am very much in favour of the discretion that we kept in that bill.

**Ms. Margaret Bridgman (Surrey North, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to rise in the House today to speak on Bill C-56, an act to amend the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act.

I would first like to make a few comments on our environment in a general sense. First, environment has a special meaning in my constituency of Surrey North. Surrey is one of the fastest growing communities in Canada. It has grown and expanded in recent years because of both immigration and migration. The immigration is mainly Asian and the migration is mainly people from the Vancouver area.

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The constituency of Surrey North is a mixture of urban and rural with the urban increasing at the expense of the rural. That alteration along with the population growth and business expansion has caused concerns and greater awareness of the environmental impacts. That desire is truly tested by an explosive population growth.

One characteristic of the people of Surrey North and indeed the people of the west coast is the desire to preserve the natural climate and the environment as best they can. Numerous environmentally oriented projects are apparent in the daily activities of west coast citizens. A heightened awareness of the importance of environmental concerns is demonstrated through more and more presentations and/or questions being asked by citizens on such things as air and water pollution, the long range effects of cutting our trees, right down to their participation in recycling programs.

Second, another environmental concern is that the wild animals are losing their homelands due to the human population explosion and the effects of meeting our own needs for survival. Only our parks are destined, probably within the next century, to become homes for our wild animals unless we change our ways.

The British Isles would be a prime example of this. A couple of centuries ago large animals such as moose and bear roamed on that land through great stands of trees. Somewhere along the line lumber gave way to bricks for building the human dwellings and the moose, the bear, the large cats and other animals that were there gradually became thought of as being indigenous to North America.

Another example of the abuse of our environment seemingly for our need for survival is in the early days of our explorers, Jacques Cartier's time for example. During that time it was recorded that the fish were so plentiful off our east coast that his crew had a tough time getting the oars in the water to move their dinghy forward.

Today we are all aware of the present situation on the east coast where the stocks have been so depleted that the economic foundation and livelihood of a region has been seriously changed, perhaps forever. Not only is there an economic impact, the fish themselves are possibly close to being an endangered species.

(1800)

Another example would be Easter Island where thriving civilizations cut trees to build homes and move great stone statues. Soon there were no trees left. The homes are no longer, the statues are stationary, and the once thriving civilization is all but gone.

Balancing the wants of people with the capabilities of the environment is a challenge which all communities must face. It is a challenge which people from Surrey have met so far. The industrial expansion of the past few years has not as far as we know had a negative impact on our environment. Surrey is a

community that disproves the notion that industry necessarily hurts environment.

We must realize as a nation that we can have a thriving economy and a healthy environment at the same time. That is the sensible approach of the Reform Party. Our blue book states support for the concept of "sustainable development" because "without economic development and the income generated therefrom the environment will not be protected or enjoyed".

What Reformers recognize is garnered from what most Canadians recognize: the importance of the environment to our livelihood as a nation; the importance of the natural resources it provides for our economy and well-being; the variables of the vast geography and sometimes harsh climate that we must encounter; and the preservation of the pure beauty of the natural environment which never ceases to amaze us and visitors to our great nation. This we must preserve.

At the end of the last sitting I drove from Ottawa to Surrey. I was taken aback and awestruck by the absolute beauty and astounding diversity of our country, from the hills, trees, and unique rock formations of northern Ontario to the wide open prairies of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta, through the majestic Rockies and down to the scenic beauty of the west coast. If you are able to ignore the areas of clear cut and look past the smoke billowing from some factory or mill, the drive across our country is an experience all Canadians should share. Only after a drive like that does one realize the magnitude, greatness and potential of our country.

We must always strive to maintain that close link between people and their natural environment in this country and continually improve our understanding of the earth itself and our effects upon it. We are as individuals much more aware today of our environment and the effects our actions can have upon it. We are also very aware that the various levels of government are actively involved in the decision making process for many of these very actions involving our environment.

Bill C-56 including the three amendments is a small step forward at the federal level to enhance the process of achieving these decisions. It would be helpful first to take a look at the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act itself.

The act requires the federal government to study the environmental impacts of a whole range of projects that until now have escaped public scrutiny. Environmental assessments have been done in the past and have not carried the weight they should in the making of the final decision. Economic considerations have had the tendency to rank higher in importance in the decision making process.

The Canadian Environmental Assessment Act creates the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency. This agency replaces the Federal Environmental Assessment Review Office. This office was criticized for being costly because of overlap and duplication and for being inconsistently applied. Replacing one office with another may not in itself improve the situation

but the review and revisions and upgrading of the regulations governing the agency's role could very well be the key to an improved performance. The failure of the federal government to provide clear guidelines led to court challenges of high profile projects such as the Oldman River dam in Alberta and the Rafferty-Alameda dam in Saskatchewan.

Under the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act four types of environmental assessments are available to meet different projects and circumstances. One would be screening, two would be comprehensive study, three would be mediation, and four would be a review by an independent panel.

(1805)

The Canadian Environmental Assessment Act was a bill proposed and passed by the former Conservative government. However the act once passed was never proclaimed, meaning that it never came into force.

In the red book the Liberals promised to amend the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act "to shift the decision making powers to an independent Canadian environmental assessment agency subject to appeal to the cabinet". That is on page 64 of the red book.

On October 6, 1994 the government issued a press release stating its intent to proclaim the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act. The reasons for the Conservatives not proclaiming the act that they passed may not be known for certain, but a reasonable guess is because of the wrangling among the industry and environmental groups and among federal and provincial bureaucrats and politicians over the act in general and certain regulations in particular.

The former and present Quebec governments opposed this act. The former Liberal environmental minister for Quebec, Pierre Paradis, appeared before the Senate in an attempt to block the bill. And I understand that the present environmental minister for Quebec is publicly opposing the proclamation of this act.

On this issue one must sympathize with the federal government, for two reasons: first, that the citizens of the country want the federal government to be active in the protection of the environment; and second, because the environment is an area not outlined in the Constitution under federal and provincial jurisdiction. There are to date no clear guidelines for the federal government to follow in this area.

The federal government must play an active role in the protection of the environment and develop clear effective guidelines for environmental issues and concerns. The Reform Party recognizes the need for federal leadership in this area.

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Also the new Liberal government has made changes in the regulations of the original act and has proposed amendments to try to satisfy the concerns of some groups. One change in the bill is the dropping of the controversial provision that would have forced environmental reviews of energy exports. This change was apparently welcomed by the oil and gas and hydroelectric industries but criticized by environmental groups.

With regard to the federal-provincial jurisdiction, the federal Minister of the Environment is able to develop co-ordinated environmental assessment procedures for conducting joint panel reviews, thus preventing overlap and jurisdictional conflict. The Reform Party supports the co-ordination between the federal and provincial governments on environment action. We support the reduction of duplication, confusion and unnecessary regulation by developing and applying environmental criteria through a joint federal-provincial process.

The present regulations of the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act divide the project into four categories: a comprehensive study list; a law list; an exclusion list; and an inclusion list.

The comprehensive study list describes those types of projects that must be assessed through a more detailed study. The law list is a list of licences, permits, certificates and other regulatory authorizations which are required for certain projects. An environmental assessment would be triggered in this case. The exclusion list describes those undertakings in relation to a physical work that do not require an environmental assessment. The inclusion list relates only to those projects that are a physical activity not related to physical work. It occurs when a federal agency issues a permit or a licence.

At the same time that the government announced its intention to proclaim the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act it announced its intention to bring forward three amendments to the act. These amendments comprise Bill C-56.

One amendment is to legally entrench the participant funding program which is an amendment to section 58 of the CEEA. This allows for intervenor funding for public participation in the review process. I agree that public participation should be encouraged as long as the funds come from within the current department allocations or budget.

(1810)

Another amendment is to section 37 of the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act. It requires a cabinet decision to respond to the recommendations of independent environmental assessment panels. Previously this decision was made by the minister only. By making it a cabinet decision opens it up for more debate and scrutiny and makes the decision process much more democratic.

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The last amendment amending section 24 of the CEEA confirms the principle of one project, one assessment in the act. This aspect of the bill is very encouraging. It addresses the possibility of numerous environmental assessments being done by the various federal departments involved and now groups all that into one assessment.

One project, one assessment makes for logical reasoning as well as indicating some fiscal responsibility and some consideration as to more efficient implementation of the project's timetable. Instead of each department involved, for example, industry, transport, environment, et cetera doing its own assessment over a period of time a panel or committee is struck with representation from all departments to participate in one assessment.

This amendment should alleviate the concerns of business to require permits from several federal departments. Under this amendment instead of businesses facing multiple reviews they would be subject to only one federal assessment. Also this principle of one assessment should lower the cost compared to having to do several assessments. Another benefit would be to speed up the process of implementation of the actual plan. Participants would not have to wait for several months or years for all the assessments to come in.

An improvement on this process would be to bring provincial representation in on the same assessment committee. This harmonizing would prevent the possibility of federal and provincial assessments contradicting each other. It also provides for one assessment, not one at the federal level and one or more at the provincial level.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate two of my previous statements. First, our environment is of major importance to us and concerns relating to it should rank high in our decision making process. Second, Bill C-56 is definitely a small, progressive step forward in achieving this end.

**Mr. Len Taylor (The Battlefords—Meadow Lake, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I was quite pleased to hear the hon. member's commitment to the environment. Anyone who lives in western Canada is well aware of the beauty that exists, but all of us know that the environment involves much more than beauty. It is home, it sustains us. Anyone who lives on this planet knows that without the land, the air and the water to sustain us we are nothing. I am very pleased to hear of the hon. member's commitment to matters of environmental concern.

My question deals with intervenor funding which is one of the amendments to the act. The member expressed support for intervenor funding and outlined her concerns about additional spending with regard to intervenor funding. While I believe there are probably arguments to be made in this regard, I would like to ask if the member has given any thought to the process of intervenor funding.

Who would she consider should examine the list of possible interveners? Who would suggest to the panel which interveners would be funded? Should a panel be struck to do this? Would the panel itself make this decision? Should the Minister of the Environment or perhaps the President of the Treasury Board be responsible for making this decision?

(1815)

**Ms. Bridgman:** Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his question. I agree with what he is saying. I can sympathize with his concerns.

When I was researching it myself it became very obvious that particular section of the bill was very vague from the actual process point of view. There does not seem to be any direction as to how that will actually transpire. I assume the results will be debated and discussed in committee.

**Mr. Morris Bodnar (Saskatoon—Dundurn, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member indicated support for funding of interveners in the process. As the hon. member is well aware, her party is taking the position that it is opposed to the court challenges program.

Could the hon. member comment on what appears to be an apparent contradiction of supporting intervenor funding but not supporting the court challenges program which in effect is an intervenor process?

**Ms. Bridgman:** Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his question. There are two possible approaches. First, when that program is actually put in place so that we can have that input in the panel from the community it becomes a component of the whole program and should be incorporated in the budget of the total program. It is not an additional program in itself. It is not an add on. It is part of the whole program and should be budgeted accordingly in the overall program.

Second, we are back to good old Reform policy and ideals, that is grassroots input. We firmly believe it is essential for the people in the community affected by the project to have access to express themselves to the committee. Again it should be formalized or structured access. That could come up in the process of how the input would come about. The whole program should be budgeted in total.

**Mr. Paul DeVillers (Simcoe North, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it gives me considerable pride to take part in today's second reading debate on the act to amend the Canadian Environment Assessment Act, CEEA.

In coming years the decisions we take or the consequences of those we fail to take with respect to the environment will have a profound impact on the legacy we leave our children and our children's children. Will the Canada they inherit be the same Canada that for the past three years the United Nations has called the best place in the world to live? Or, will the Canada they inherit be one in which our natural environment, the source

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of many of the comparative advantages we enjoy, be compromised in order to meet the short term needs of today?

Some might consider my characterization of these options as mere rhetorical excess, but I profoundly believe these are the real choices we face.

[*Translation*]

The previous government spent a lot of time and energy to develop the legislation we are now discussing. Eight years ago, the then minister was the first to try to integrate a more rigorous environmental evaluation process into the laws of the land.

Ironically, his successor, now Leader of the Official Opposition, was the architect of the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act. I used the word "ironically" because I believe that all Canadians should be grateful to him for having developed a bill that is basically good but which the present Minister of Environment has improved and reinforced.

(1820)

[*English*]

The Leader of the Opposition's successor actually tabled CEAA but was unable to galvanize the political support necessary within his own party to get it proclaimed. The current leader of the Progressive Conservative Party had his chance to move CEAA forward. He worked with both House and Senate committees to make several positive thoughtful changes to the original legislation but he too was unable to proclaim the act. Finally the last Minister of the Environment in the previous government was unable to get his government to focus on the urgent need for CEAA to be proclaimed.

The record is remarkable. Over a seven-year period no less than five ministers were unable to proclaim this important piece of legislation. The legislation represents reform which the overwhelming majority of Canadian environmental groups, industry associations, provincial governments and ordinary Canadians concerned about the environment agree is an absolute necessity.

There is an important lesson here to which I want to draw the attention of members. For various reasons certain misguided interests pulled out all the stops to try to prevent this forward looking piece of legislation from ever seeing the light of day. That is why the achievements of the Deputy Prime Minister and the Minister of the Environment on this file are all the more remarkable.

[*Translation*]

Actually, in less than a year, she was able to obtain the collaboration of interested groups in order to review the four key regulations that give the law its real scope and make them more precise, more concrete and more rigorous. The minister has

reinforced the act by bringing forward an amendment forcing the Minister of Environment to establish a funding program that will allow an enlightened participation of the public to reviews and mediation processes.

The minister took steps so that the review commissions' recommendations receive due consideration by requiring that they be submitted to a cabinet decision. Following the wishes of the industry she induced an amendment so that decisions could be taken more rapidly and in a more co-ordinated way after environmental assessments, according to the principle of one evaluation per project. In less than a year, the minister did more than five Conservative ministers in eight years. Present and future generations of Canadians owe her a lot.

[*English*]

The 1987 report of the World Commission on Environment and Development pointed out that the environment is where we live and development is what we all do in attempting to improve our lot within the abode. The two are inseparable. The commission was right and remains so today.

Environment and economy are inseparable. An environmental assessment is the foundation upon which sustainable development can and must rest. Conducting environmental assessments makes both good economic and environmental sense. By integrating environmental concerns early in the planning stages before decisions are made, business and industry protect themselves from having to deal with environmental problems later on.

[*Translation*]

Several features of the new environmental assessment system are worthy of note. The first one is public participation, which is recognized as essential to any efficient environmental assessment. In fact, the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act provides the public with many opportunities to become involved in the various stages of the assessment process.

It provides for the establishment of a public registry to ensure the accessibility of the documents relating to any ongoing federal environmental assessment, including those conducted in co-operation with a province. It sets into law a participant funding program ensuring that resources are made available to interested individuals and groups to participate efficiently in the process.

The second feature that I would like to mention reflects the federal government's commitment to changing decision-making practices throughout the federal administration. Recommendations from public review panels will be subject to a joint cabinet decision. Another amendment is designed to ensure that only one federal environmental assessment is conducted with respect to a project, which will permit better coordination of the decision-making process in projects where more than one federal department or agency is involved.



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All these interrelated measures will have the effect of making federal departments and agencies, as well as cabinet, more responsible for the environmental impact of their decisions. These measures are an important step in the development of a government-wide environmental culture.

The third feature is the creation and maintenance of a public registry accessible to all stakeholders. This provision will have a positive impact on environmental assessment, as an art and science, a new and growing discipline. With each assessment, more knowledge is gained regarding the complex, symbiotic interrelations between people, development and the environment.

(1825)

*[English]*

It is not a static process. It is a living, breathing, interactive one. The use of public registries does more than just provide a rich source of relevant and accessible information for both project proponents and those likely to be impacted by a proposed development.

What is often overlooked is that the public registries provide a means of ensuring the institutional memory acquired in the conduct of the environmental assessment is preserved. Indeed the CEAA reform package we are debating has been carefully crafted with the notion that environmental assessment is a dynamic process firmly in mind.

The fact that we have provided expanded opportunities for public involvement throughout the environmental assessment process speaks eloquently to this point. We have no intention of allowing CEAA to become brittle or irrelevant. Its coming into force constitutes the beginning and not the end of the process of change. All parliamentarians regardless of political stripe have a responsibility to make it work and contribute to its success.

The previous government used words like effective, efficient, fair, open and transparent to describe its intentions vis-à-vis environmental assessment. We on this side of the House have acted quickly and decisively to give effect to those words by improving and proclaiming CEAA.

We have acted because we view sound stewardship over the environment as extremely important. Our actions serve to give real definition to the words. That is why all members of the House can and should support CEAA. We have a responsibility to act for future generations.

**Mr. Bill Gilmour (Comox—Alberni, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I compliment the member on his speech.

As we are both on the environment committee, I was curious about his research. I was unable to find the area that deals with ministerial discretion on whether or not to look at a project. I am referring specifically to the Kemano project in British Columbia where the former government basically said it did not need environmental assessment.

Was there anywhere the member looked when he was looking for material for his speech that would cover this in the new bill? I was unable to find any and it leaves me a bit uneasy that the minister still has the discretion to ignore or postpone an assessment.

**Mr. DeVillers:** Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for his question. As I understand the process the minister will be receiving advice from the environmental assessment agency that is being set up. I would hope that is how the system would work.

As the member well knows, the process provides for the bill to go to committee. These are issues and questions that we can raise at that level before final reading of the bill.

**Mr. Len Taylor (The Battlefords—Meadow Lake, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the member spoke about the involvement of the current Minister of the Environment and gave her a considerable amount of credit for moving the bill forward when other ministers had been unable to do so.

I agree that the current Minister of the Environment has done what few have been able to do in the past, but I recognize what some of the problems are. One problem is simply that the bill came before cabinet on numerous occasions, just as the regulations came before cabinet on numerous occasions. The minister and others had to argue with other cabinet ministers concerning the ability of the cabinet to move the bill forward. Ministers with economic portfolios have always had a stronger say in cabinet than ministers of the environment.

(1830)

I wonder if members recognize that one of the amendments provides for the greater authority of cabinet to have the final say on projects; not the panel, not the Minister of the Environment, but cabinet. Is the member prepared at committee to have a look at the structure of cabinet where the economic ministers have a very strong say in the kind of environmental legislation or regulations we have in our country?

**Mr. DeVillers:** Mr. Speaker, one consideration the member should take into account is that the proclamation and amendment of this bill was in the red book. It was part of the Liberal election platform. All cabinet ministers with economic portfolios or otherwise subscribe to the red book policy.

**Mr. Taylor:** Yes, but it took a year.

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**Mr. DeVillers:** The member points out that it took a year. However, as I indicated in my comments, the former government had eight years and did not proclaim it. It has been passed.

To answer the question, would I be prepared to look at it at committee? It is my role in committee to look at all legitimate issues and to make appropriate recommendations.

**Mr. Dennis J. Mills (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Industry, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin by commenting on the remark by the member for The Battlefords—Meadow Lake who said this took a whole year.

This bill is not the only thing we have done in the last year. In fact, I was thinking as we went through this legislation today that I am absolutely amazed at how much of the red book agenda we have been able to get done in our first year. At the rate we are going we will have everything in the red book done within the first two years when the Prime Minister had said the red book agenda would happen over the term of the government.

I begin by complimenting the Minister of the Environment and Deputy Prime Minister for moving forward on this very important legislation, the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act. I believe that the balance sheet of a nation will be judged by the way we take care of our environment.

The environmental assessment legislation is a systematic method of identifying potential environmental consequences of a proposed project and its impact on people, their livelihood and way of life. If these environmental consequences are identified early in the planning stages, then plans can be modified so potential risks are minimized or ideally eliminated.

Environmental assessment is a very logical tool for achieving sustainable development, that is ensuring that the needs of present generations can be met while allowing future generations to meet their needs.

I believe the legislation will lead to a whole new measurement of the economy. In the past the environment really has not been driving the economic agenda in our country. In fact, the environment always got a short shrift.

(1835)

I actually should go back to when my colleague from Davenport was the Minister of the Environment in the previous Liberal government. He was probably the first Minister of the Environment to give the issue such a determined, sustained approach. His tenacity in making sure that this issue was always on the front burner gave all of us in the Liberal Party a real example. The Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for the Environment is following through today with that commitment from the red book.

I noticed in a book that I was reading earlier in preparing for this debate, written by Julia Moulden and Patrick Carson, *Green Is Gold*, that we now have industries that are starting to realize that if they commit to greening themselves or committing themselves to the environmental movement that their balance sheets can be much more profitable.

Even though the member stated that we were a year getting to this bill, ideally it should have been one we handled in the first quarter. However the fact is that we have now got the bill in the system. It will no doubt pass, we will be setting up a whole new structure and the environment will now take on a priority position.

I would like to say to members opposite that this is a bill on which we must all be united. It is a bill that regrettably once again the Bloc Quebecois will not support, not because its members are not committed to the environment, but because once again whenever you come forward with a bill that talks about national standards, a bill that can galvanize the spirit of the country, legislation that can pull us all together, the Bloc is consistent in walking away from it. They find some excuse that it impinges on the rights of Quebecers.

If there is one thing that everyone is committed to in every part of Canada it is saving the planet. I believe that Quebecers, once they understand the true meaning of the bill, will probably urge some of their Bloc Quebecois members to be a little less political and a little more concerned about what truly is important for everyone in our society, especially for future generations.

I stand here today in total support of this bill.

**Mr. Len Taylor (The Battlefords—Meadow Lake, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciated the comments from the hon. member. He has spoken on numerous occasions in the House on the environment, business and the economy. I always listen carefully to what he has to say.

I want to indicate that the matter that I was raising about it taking a year for the government to bring this bill in was in relation to the difficulties that ministers have sometimes in dealing with cabinet on environmental issues.

In the half minute available to me, I want to say that the minister probably could have brought in the bill in the first quarter. Consultation with environmental organizations and industry was concluded relatively early in the process. But the process of getting the new regulations through cabinet was a very difficult task. Again I commend the minister but it shows that cabinet is still a very powerful body when it comes to dealing with issues like this.

If the government has the will to see that the environment will be a first priority, then the system works. If this government or the next government chooses not to have the environment as its top priority, then the system does not work. We have to ensure

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that parliamentarians and Canadians all have an opportunity to respond to power when there is abuse. I just wanted to clarify that matter.

The member also indicated the accounting that occurs in the country. He talked about green accounting. I wonder if the member could tell me if he supports the principle of green accounting when we look at the way our country is developing. It is not an efficient economy based on GNP, growth and development. An efficient economy is one that is based on preservation and conservation as much as growth and development. Is that important to the member?

(1840)

**Mr. Mills (Broadview—Greenwood):** Mr. Speaker, I want to say to the member that I appreciate the question. I believe we are on a pathway and that this bill will move us along that pathway more quickly in changing our whole system of calculation.

Some members have talked about—I know we have talked in our own policy group in my riding—about this new notion of a human development index rather than a GNP. The GNP system is not really sensitive to sustainable development. At least to this point it has not been.

I personally love the idea of exploring a whole new way of calculating the balance sheet, not only of our nation but of the planet. The GNP system of old falls off and we convert to a new human development index where the environment and sustainable development are the core factor and the driving factor in the equation.

I believe this cabinet and government is one of the first groups I have seen in a long time around here that has the courage to venture into those waters. The reason I say that is I see the reform we are going through in our social security system. I see the reform in so many other areas.

We are in a period of real reform on so many different issues. I am optimistic that in the not too distant future the whole notion of a human development index will be the new way we measure our whole economic system.

**Mr. Bob Mills (Red Deer, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, it gives me pleasure to speak to the issue of the environment.

As we have heard today all of us are concerned about the environment. We are concerned about the air; we are concerned about the water; we are concerned about the soil around us.

Often we look at the environment and we see the radical end of things on the scale. Then we see the radical things on the industrial scale. As all of us recognize it is really the middle ground, the ground of compromise, co-operation and in many cases the ground of trade-offs. We have to understand these trade-offs.

Often someone says: "You're getting kind of hard on environmentalists". I answer: "Yes, but I don't want to live in a cave

and go out and grow my own food. If I don't want to do that, then I have to make trade-offs in order to live the way I want to".

I have a long background in the area of environment. Professionally that was my training. I was involved 25 years ago in the Conservator Society. I went around the country talking about what we could do to conserve our society, recycling and so on. I must admit it was kind of an off topic back then. We were not very popular when we talked about it. A lot of people did not know what we were talking about.

I came from that age of *Silent Spring*, of the environmental impact studies. I worked for the Canadian Wildlife Service. From all that background I gained a real appreciation of preservation of the environment.

As well I have learned that the environment is not in the domain only of socialists and liberals but is of concern to everyone. I want to assure the member for The Battlefords—Meadow Lake that when we form the next government we will be concerned about the environment and will place it high on our list of priorities.

I want to also address the member on the reforms that are going on. We are part of that overall reform.

I want as well to quote from our blue book on the environment: "We want to establish clear federal-provincial jurisdiction over environmental matters. We want to reduce duplication, confusion and all of the unnecessary things that so often go with government. We believe the government should provide federal leadership, encourage partnership, encourage private industry to get involved, encourage educational institutions and of course encourage the public to be part of these environmental protection studies".

(1845)

The environment is related to all of us and interrelated. There are many things wrong and those have been identified here today.

We must of course be equal to everyone and we must go for equal enforcement. In looking at Bill C-56 I think we go at least some way to accomplishing what we want to. Certainly the one assessment will save time and money and will avoid some of the duplication of so many examples we could talk about.

Participatory funding. Having been involved in that grass-roots level of trying to participate in environmental involvement, I can certainly appreciate having that as part of this bill. I think if that is properly administered and decisions are made properly that that can be a great plus for people wanting to get involved in projects and understanding them better.

The decision that the cabinet, not just one minister, will make the decisions regarding this of course becomes even more credible today. A lot of us are reading the recent book published about the last government and that would convince us even more that we want more than one minister deciding anything.

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We have a lot of examples that we need to confirm the need for a bill like this. We have of course, and this has been mentioned many times, the Oldman River dam project. The environmental assessment that should have been triggered and was not would have saved so many dollars, so much confusion and so many problems that have now gone on with a project like that. It has demonstrated and caused a confrontation rather than co-operation.

We must avoid duplication. It emphasizes we must have provincial co-operation and third parties involved rather than just through the courts of law.

Federal-provincial duplication is enormous. This is one area this bill does not address adequately that I would like to see possible amendments to. We must resolve these federal-provincial problems. That is essential with getting on with the job.

I use an example of a company in my constituency. I have a letter from the Alberta environmental minister, Brian Evans, in which he says: "I can assure you that the issue of duplication overlap is at the top of the agenda for Canadian ministers of the environment". He goes on to say that the agreement that Alberta has signed will go a long way to help solve the problem.

An Alberta government document goes on to state: "This agreement will greatly reduce the burden placed on industry because of a dual regulatory framework. From now on the Alberta government will be the primary representative in dealing and contacts with the pulp and paper industry". He goes on to describe other industries. He continues: "The establishment of a single window at the provincial level does not relieve industry from the obligation to comply with federal regulations. Each level of government retains its respective legislative powers and can take legal action against defenders". While it has moved some way it has not moved all the way.

I will go on with some examples and look at some of the background where this harmonization just has not occurred. One thing I would like to stress here today is that we must get the harmonization of this environmental assessment program. I think all sides would agree. I am disappointed to hear some of the dissenters to that whom we have heard from today.

I would also list four items that have been identified for me in my constituency. There is a big problem with reports between provincial and federal governments. There is a great variation between what they are asking for and yet they end up getting to the same place.

Second, there is a real perception that business is doing something wrong and that they are always doing something wrong. The lack of co-operation where one government does

not trust the other one has to be alleviated. We must get away from the idea that in fact industry cannot pay for and be involved in some of this analysis. We also must look at the regulations to be sure they are realistic. Again, I have many examples of where unrealistic legislation is in place in terms of environment.

(1850)

The duplication of regulations has played havoc with particularly smaller oil companies. I can summarize some of this by listing four major areas. The purpose of most regulations is reasonable. However they become ridiculous when the administration of the regulations and the people involved begin to protect their own turf and refuse to be reasonable or co-operate with the other branches of government for fear of losing their power. Again we have many examples of that.

We must also be concerned about their competitiveness within Canada. The number of reports keeps increasing which greatly handicaps smaller companies. Having one extra person to complete reports in a plant involving 10 people is quite a bit different than adding one person in a company of 500. We must consider that. We must keep these companies competitive.

I quote an example from one of my constituents: "In the early 1980s I was closely involved with the major grassroots complex being built close to Fort Saskatchewan in Alberta. Over a period of two and a half years the company had to make a total of 4,200 submissions, permits and other formal requests from every conceivable government branch in three layers of government. Many of the pieces of information was repeated many times over because a given permit could only be issued for 30 days. If we informed one level that the same information was sent two months ago to, say, the federal environmental group we were told that confidentiality prevented moving information between departments and the same information would have to be submitted in the new format requested".

At the end of the project a complete listing of the total number was sent to the Alberta economic development department for review because no one could believe the number and they were dismayed and shocked by the number of reports. We must address that. We must do something about that. We are literally putting small business out of business because of environmental regulations and no co-operation between levels of government. It is reasonable then. We must deal with this. We must address this problem.

Going on, the lack of co-operation seems to go on and on. I will not get into all of this because I intend to deal with another subject. What we must do is end the duplication, the lack of co-operation, the protecting of different departments' turf that goes on in this whole area of environmental testing.

*Government Orders*

I finish this section off by saying I have an example of the bureaucratic growth that has gone on. In terms of water testing for a number of oil projects in Alberta the company does a complete set of independent lab studies. These go on, and I have copies of them, for some 30 to 40 pages. Then the province comes along and does the same testing and sampling and it goes through all of the expense and duplication of 30 or 40 pages. Then the federal government comes along and does all the same testing and it does 30 or 40 pages of reports on the same material. Neither side will talk to each other because each side is afraid of losing its jobs.

That kind of environmental holding back of companies has to end. An example of the growth of bureaucracy in licensing is where reports used to be four pages, today they are 34 pages. Whether it is air emissions, sulphur emissions, or whatever, the reports go on and government grows.

If I had to encourage anything I would encourage the harmonization of this environmental conflict and the co-operation between all of these levels of government and all of these bureaucrats.

I would now like to get into another area which I have been involved with some 30 years now and that is in the environmental area that I feel involves all of us. A lot of people sort of laugh when I say I am really interested in this subject and that is the subject of landfills, the subject of garbage. The problem that all of us have is universal. It is a problem where everybody says: "Don't put them in my backyard, put them over there".

(1855)

It is a universal problem across this country. There is a problem whether one is a landowner or whether one lives in a city or town. There are some basic problems that make this a federal issue. When we phone the Department of the Environment here, we are told: "That is not our area, that is a provincial area". This is a good example of where there are roles for the three levels of government.

Let me propose what I have in mind. First, the biggest problem is from the seepage going on underneath the ground. We are contaminating groundwater. We are contaminating lakes. We are contaminating rivers. We are doing things to our environment that will only come forward 50 or 100 years from now.

It is fine to build deficits and say: "Well, we know we are going to have those to deal with". Now we are going to tell them they are not going to have water to use. We must address that. What is the solution? There are solutions. One problem is they cost money. I think if people understood the problem and the potential time bomb they were creating, they would deal with this.

Recycling, composting and incineration are all areas that somebody in Canada needs to look at. We could be world leaders. How can we work this through the provinces and

through the cities? What happens now is the feds say: "Well, it is not our area. We cannot touch that because it is provincial".

I see the federal government providing the umbrella. I see the federal government providing the research and development, the technology, the gathering together of information, putting together the seminars it takes, getting the experts involved. I see it being the resource for all other levels of government. I see the provinces providing a unified delivery of the service and then I see the municipalities as the operators of whatever that facility is now.

What happens today? Today we have the municipality doing the research, trying to decide what it should have. Meanwhile, it does not have the money, the technology or the people. It is not in a position to try to deal with that subject.

I would like to see in a bill like this the ability and the encouragement of the federal government to get involved in this issue. It is an issue for everyone. All of us have garbage problems. It is one where I think we are putting our head in the sand in trying to deal with it.

In summary my party and I would support this bill. It could go much further in the area of environmental leadership. I could see it taking on, as I say, things like landfills. It should speed up the process. It should save money. It must get involved in co-ordinating federal-provincial areas. It allows third party input and it does protect the individual from government force.

Finally, the environment is a world issue. Being a member of the foreign affairs committee I can relate to the fact that this is a global problem. If China builds 18 huge coal generated power plants, that air will be over Canada in a couple of days. That air is going to affect us. That is air that we will have to breathe. We cannot be just a province or Canada. We must be the world when it comes to environment.

I encourage all politicians to be concerned about China, the South American rain forest, and sustainable development. We can all play a role in that. We cannot put our heads in the sand any longer.

**Mr. Dennis J. Mills (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Industry, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I compliment the member on his remarks. I want to deal with that part of his speech where he dealt with the ideas of composting and recycling.

I agree with the member. This is an area where we could be world leaders.

(1900)

We are world leaders right now. The problem as I see it is that we do not have the political will to implement some of the technologies we have in the area of taking care of our garbage in a proper way. I believe this is so important that taxpayers would probably support us spending their money to make sure an aggressive campaign such as the one the member described was implemented.

*Government Orders*

I had difficulty in that often we have been conditioned by the Reform Party that spending is something that its members are very shy about. Is this an area where the Reform Party would shift its traditional attitude?

**Mr. Mills (Red Deer):** Mr. Speaker, there are areas in which we would not cut. We would be selective in our cutting and our balancing of costs. One area certainly would be environment where we would see no cutting. Our blue sheet said that possibly we might see in the area of criminal justice and environment an increase in spending.

I would like to think the entire House could get behind a project like this one and show environmental leadership. The provinces need it and we could get them onside because it is a universal problem. If somebody can provide a solution for a universal problem, we could very easily get them onside. We have to get out there. We can call it a crusade but we have to handle the problem.

We can have people pay for it. I believe that user pay will work in this area. Instead of paying \$3 for handling their garbage people would in fact pay \$6. I really believe they would if they knew what they were getting for their money. The big problem of people and of us not wanting to spend money is that we see waste and we cannot see value for our dollars.

**Mr. Len Taylor (The Battlefords—Meadow Lake, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I have a couple of questions for the member for Red Deer whom I compliment on his speech. He certainly brought some interesting ideas to the Chamber. I was very happy to listen to him today.

In particular I was very pleased with the words that he used in his opening remarks. He talked about this being the ground of co-operation, the ground of compromise. Those are the grounds on which I believe the country was built. We live in a very diverse nation. Different people from coast to coast have relied on co-operation and compromise to see them through from day to day and year to year.

The country was built on those grounds. I am very pleased to see the hon. member recognize those grounds at this time. I can only hope the same rules will apply to other issues in the Chamber when we are dealing with issues of great concern to the diverse peoples who live within our borders.

My question deals with the issue of the Oldman dam that the member for Red Deer raised. Bill C-13 now provides some triggers that automatically gets the federal government involved in a project assessment. When I asked a similar question of the parliamentary secretary earlier today, he talked about the federal government being timid in the past in its approach to some of the issues guarded by the provinces.

Could the member for Red Deer indicate whether he believes the federal government has a right to intervene when some of these triggers are in place and provincial governments hesitate and resist federal government involvement in the projects they are promoting?

**Mr. Mills (Red Deer):** Mr. Speaker, the real answer to that question is to get involved early enough. What so often has happened in the past, whether they have been political deals or lobby groups or special interest groups or whatever, is that there has been a real slow response by the federal government.

The provinces have been slow but the federal government has been slower. The real answer to the problem that the hon. member raises is the speed of response. We hear about these projects. That is when the federal government should get in, provide the leadership role and start negotiations and compromising with the provincial governments. That is where it has to happen early rather than late as in the Oldman dam.

(1905 )

**Mr. Taylor:** Mr. Speaker, I have a short supplementary question. In his speech the member also talked about water testing, in particular water testing for oil companies in Alberta.

The member may be aware of a project near my constituency where Esso Resources has been withdrawing water with the approval of the provincial government from an aquifer that runs under the provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan. Communities in my constituency have seen reduced water flow as a result of the work in Alberta. There has been a tremendous amount of wrangling between the Saskatchewan and the Alberta interests. There has been no room for federal government assessment or work to date.

With the member's experience would he consider the support of a national water act that would help to bridge some of the gaps between provincial government interests and others to ensure that water is available to all Canadians?

**Mr. Mills (Red Deer):** Mr. Speaker, we should realize that water will be the most important resource we have in the 21st century. I believe that puts us head and shoulders ahead of the rest of the world. We have something like 9 per cent of world's fresh water supplies. We have to keep it fresh and pure.

Not knowing the exact details the member puts forward, I would think legislation to protect and preserve the water supply is essential and vital to the survival of the country. I firmly believe it is the most important resource we have.

**Mr. Taylor:** Mr. Speaker, I have just noticed the clock. It is my understanding that we have only 10 minutes remaining in the day. I do have at least the full 20 minutes allocated to me. I wonder if the House would not like to see the clock and allow me the full 20 minutes when the House next convenes.

*Government Orders*

**Mr. Boudria:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I am prepared to agree with that if the House will then agree to put the question at that point.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger):** I wonder if I could ask for further clarification. Are we only speaking about the 20-minute intervention or are we also including the 10-minute question or comment period? It is just the straight 20 minutes.

Members have heard the suggestion of the government whip. Is that agreeable to the House?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger):** The member for the Battlefords—Meadow Lake will have 20 minutes and I will put the question forthwith upon conclusion of his intervention.

**Mr. Len Taylor (The Battlefords—Meadow Lake, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I seem to have achieved something extra to what I wished. I was suggesting that when the House sits next I would conclude my remarks. However I am quite prepared to do so now.

I appreciate the opportunity to say a few words on this very important bill. I have had a considerable amount of influence over the bill during the last four years. I am very much aware that the bill has been at least seven years in the making. When it was first proposed to the previous Parliament by the now leader of the Bloc Québécois and then Minister of the Environment, I happened to be the New Democratic member responsible for environmental protection issues. Therefore I was asked by my party to sit in on discussions of Bill C-78 and to represent the New Democratic Party throughout the committee process on the piece of legislation.

I was quite taken by the responsibilities I was given at that time because the House will recall there was a great deal of criticism of Bill C-78.

(1910)

The government began at that point a process that I think should be recommended for many other pieces of legislation. What began with Bill C-78 was something called a pre-study of the bill. In other words before the bill was introduced in the House the specific bill was presented to the parliamentary committee to have a look at it and allow for some intervention before the government actually introduced it and before the government would claim ownership of the wording of the bill.

The pre-study process gave us an opportunity to examine the bill without the partisan interventions that occur often when sides dig in on a debate and will not yield any ground. The

pre-study phase of Bill C-78, short as it was, began the process of openness about the bill.

When Parliament of the time prorogued and the new Parliament began, the bill was reintroduced as Bill C-13. I had hoped at that point that with the prior work that had been done by the parliamentary committee Bill C-13 would have been amended by the government before being introduced into the new session. That not being the case, we were given an indication that the bill would be amended in committee with the approval of the government.

We began the process of amending the bill. Again something happened in committee that I am very proud to say I was a part of. I would commend it to the government and to future governments as a way of dealing with legislation in a very non-confrontational way. The government indicated that it was prepared to accept amendments from the committee and we proceeded to approach the bill with that understanding. I submitted over 110 amendments to the committee for study.

The point that I want to emphasize is that the committee chose to bring in legal experts to sit with us in the committee while we went through that amending process. Two environmental lawyers who had appeared as witnesses were brought in by the committee, Mr. Bill Andrews and Mr. Brian Pannell. They sat around the table and advised members of the committee about the legality and the practicality of amendments.

It was a great exercise and one from which the committee benefited a great deal. In fact the country benefited a great deal from it because Bill C-13 was amended with their assistance. As a result the bill that has now been proclaimed by the government is the bill we amended. The member for Davenport being a member of the committee at the time, myself and others worked very hard to find the best possible bill in the spirit of compromise that needed to exist to achieve that result.

The environment committee is presently doing a massive study of the Canadian Environmental Protection Act. I would commend the use of environmental legal experts when the committee sits down to conduct its final review of the act and write the report that must be written which may indeed result in some additions, changes or amendments to the Canadian Environmental Protection Act. I believe the process of utilizing legal experts was of great benefit to us.

Now we are at the point where after a year of waiting we have Bill C-13 proclaimed, the agency about to be established, a new environmental assessment process about to begin, some new regulations in place that are going to guide us through some very important assessment work into the future, and a couple of

*Government Orders*

amendments before the House to allow us again the opportunity to have a look at the bill.

I will raise it in committee as well, but I believe the three amendments I support, the three amendments in front of us, are not sufficient to make the bill the important bill it could be.

I mention a couple of things in this regard. The first is with regard to intervener funding. We have raised it a number of times in the House today. The intervener funding process is absolutely crucial to the positive workings of the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act itself.

(1915)

In fact, as we are well aware, proponents of projects generally have access to the capital they need to see that project through to completion. They budget for the preparation of environmental assessment reports. They budget for the public hearings that may take place. They are prepared to deal with that. However, without adequate intervener funding there cannot be adequate assessment quite simply because those who wish to challenge the proponent do not have the same access to capital as the proponent does and budgets for.

It is very important that we set out a very specific intervener funding process to ensure that it is not only adequate but indeed meets all the criteria that we have established in the past for an intervener funding program that works positively. I commend the government for seeing the need to move forward with intervener funding in more specific terms like this. I hope that in the committee we will be able to broaden that out.

I also suggest that the committee have another look at the regulatory process while looking at the act and there is the opportunity to review it. The regulatory process is what provides for the workings of the environmental assessment. The act sets out the guidelines but without the regulations the act is not much. The regulations make it work. This is why we have noticed and recognized that the regulation making process itself has been so controversial, so complex and has involved so much time.

Members of cabinet, industry, and the environmental community have all had input into the regulation making process. However members of the House of Commons speaking for all Canadians have not had the opportunity to respond to the final product they have produced. Unlike the act where we can debate parts of it, we can go to committee and study parts of the act, in terms of the specific regulations members of Parliament in the House of Commons do not have the same opportunities to challenge parts of the regulatory process.

It is time we looked at an amendment I raised two years ago in this very Chamber. It was an amendment similar to a clause in the existing gun control legislation that allows for members of Parliament and members of the other place to call before committee certain regulations for scrutiny. We should have a

similar clause in the legislation that would allow us to call certain pieces of regulatory decisions and discuss them in committee.

The process of ultimate cabinet responsibility should also be examined. Although I am supporting the amendment about cabinet responsibility at the moment, I do believe that at a time when governments are demonstrating they cannot be trusted—we had a government in this country for nine years that proved that—we have to ensure it is Parliament and the people of Canada in the end who have a full understanding and responsibility for matters like this.

When a panel makes a decision based on a tremendous amount of information, the government should be looking very seriously at the results of that panel hearing. When cabinet makes a final decision on a panel recommendation members of the cabinet can never have read that recommendation but have been influenced by many members of industry who perhaps have been speaking to them in another context but have made their wishes well known. The secrecy of the cabinet room should not be the final arbiter of public environmental process.

(1920)

In any case I do recognize the accountability of government through the cabinet process. As I say I support the amendment before us, but it is important that perhaps the committee look at this process and see if there is not another way of dealing with this very important and specific issue.

I believe very strongly in the concept of environmental assessment. I heard the witnesses who appeared before the committees on Bill C-78 and Bill C-13. Witnesses from the corporate community indicated very strongly that they wanted to see an environmental assessment process that was up front and took the issues on early and did not come at them after the fact.

The court rulings that have been made across the country have indicated clearly that the guidelines that existed and continue to exist until Bill C-13 was proclaimed were inadequate to meet the needs of the country. Therefore Bill C-13 although it is not the one I would have written had I been the Minister of the Environment is very much a bill that moves us forward. Certainly the amendments in front of us do that as well.

We have the opportunity to move this process forward a great deal further than the three amendments do. I hope the committee which will receive this bill at the will of the House at the end of my remarks tonight will look seriously at taking the bill a little further than the government is prepared to move at this point in time.

I appreciate the co-operation of the House in allowing me to finish my remarks. In that spirit of co-operation and compromise I will not abuse the time of the House.



*Adjournment Debate*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger):** On behalf of all our colleagues, I thank the member for his co-operation.

[*Translation*]

Is the House ready for the question?

**Some hon. members:** Question.

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

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

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

**Some hon. members:** Yea.

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

**Some hon. members:** Nay.

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

*And more than five members having risen:*

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

*And the division bells having stopped:*

[*English*]

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger):** Pursuant to Standing Order 45(5)(a), I have been requested by the chief government whip to defer the division until a later time. Accordingly, pursuant to Standing Order 45 the division on the question now before the House stands deferred until tomorrow at 6 p.m., at which time the bells to call in the members will be sounded for not more than 15 minutes.

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## ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

[*English*]

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

### NUCLEAR TESTING

**Hon. Charles Caccia (Davenport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, last week I asked the Minister of Foreign Affairs if he would urge the Prime Minister on his visit to Beijing to raise with Chinese authorities the need to end nuclear testing for the sake of planetary security.

The non-proliferation treaty, or NPT, was signed in 1968 by approximately 160 nations. As part of this treaty countries with nuclear weapons have agreed to work toward the reduction of their nuclear arsenals and to work toward a comprehensive test ban treaty. Developing countries agreed not to develop nuclear weapons in exchange for information regarding peaceful uses of nuclear power.

(1925)

However since 1964, Britain has carried out some 44; France, 210; and the United States more than 1,000 nuclear tests. During the last few years testing has virtually been suspended. Since 1991 Russia has not tested any weapons nor has the United States. Britain has not undertaken any testing in recent years either. All major countries have put in place voluntary moratoria.

Two weeks ago the Government of China carried out its 41st test. Therefore in addition to my earlier question to the Prime Minister, tonight I am asking the minister of external affairs whether he will personally take an interest in the negotiations of the extension of the nuclear non-proliferation treaty which will run out in 1995.

Will Canada play a leadership role at the United Nations? Will Canada on behalf of all Canadians press the UN for a new treaty? Will that new treaty, first, ban the use of all nuclear weapons and weapons tests, and second, provide for better enforcement powers to the International Atomic Energy Agency so that better comprehensive monitoring of compliance can be carried out on behalf of the world community?

**Mr. Patrick Gagnon (Parliamentary Secretary to Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in continuing to conduct nuclear tests China is breaking the tacit moratorium which has been observed by all nuclear weapon states. China has said it will participate in comprehensive test ban treaty negotiations. Nonetheless continued testing by China draws into question its commitment to the early completion of the comprehensive test ban treaty negotiations.

I would like to remind the hon. member it is true that on October 7, 1994 the People's Republic of China conducted its third underground nuclear test since the start of the CTBT negotiations.

Although Britain, France, and the former Soviet Union, now the Russian Federation of the United States, have all instituted national testing moratoria, China has refused to stop testing, arguing that it needs further tests to catch up technologically with other nuclear weapon states.

What Canada has done is encourage the People's Republic of China to engage in responsible, international behaviour with respect to arms sales and nuclear proliferation. To this end we have pressured China to end its testing program. Following the second test, our ambassador at the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva made a strong public appeal and, as members know, following the last test the Chinese ambassador was called in by

*Adjournment Debate*

the Minister of Foreign Affairs and was apprised in no uncertain terms of Canada's condemnation of continued nuclear testing.

The Prime Minister, who will be heading off to China very shortly, has been fully briefed on these matters and intends to raise them with the highest levels of the Chinese leadership.

Canada's relationship with China on non-proliferation matters are complex. In some areas, like the cut-off and NPT extension, there is near-term potential for productive co-operation. On others like testing we will continue to press China to do

the right thing and to join the other nations in banning nuclear testing once and for all.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger):** Pursuant to Standing Order 38(5), the motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted.

Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m. pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 7.29 p.m.)

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