



CANADA

# House of Commons Debates

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OFFICIAL REPORT  
(HANSARD)

**Wednesday, November 17, 1999**

**Speaker: The Honourable Gilbert Parent**

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# HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, November 17, 1999

The House met at 2 p.m.

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*Prayers*

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• (1400)

**The Speaker:** As is our practice on Wednesday we will now sing O Canada, and we will be led by the hon. member for Perth—Middlesex.

*[Editor's Note: Members sang the national anthem]*

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## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

*[English]*

### CIDA

**Mrs. Karen Redman (Kitchener Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this week in Ottawa, as part of the International Co-operation Days, the Canadian International Development Agency is meeting with over 1,200 representatives from all sectors involved in international development.

The meetings will enable the minister responsible to outline her priorities and to hear from Canadians and overseas partners about their work in Africa, Latin America and Asia.

Through CIDA and its partners, Canadians can be proud of our contribution to creating a more secure and prosperous world for us all.

In my riding of Kitchener Centre, organizations such as the Mennonite Central Committee have worked with CIDA and have been able to assist individuals who are in need and living in devastated areas such as Kosovo.

I am pleased to represent a community that has a long and distinguished tradition of helping the citizens in the world in times of crisis.

In the Speech from the Throne, the government indicated that we will do more. For example, CIDA will support programs that educate young girls in Africa, assist women in Asia to start—

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for Surrey Central.

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### JUSTICE

**Mr. Gurmant Grewal (Surrey Central, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday, five self-proclaimed skinheads, convicted in the murder of Sikh Temple caretaker Nirmal Singh Gill, were given prison sentences of 15 to 18 years.

These prison terms were already reduced by three years and will probably be further reduced in the Liberal's soft criminal justice system. Life should mean life, but criminal penalties are routinely watered down.

Canadians want tougher penalties for violent crime. Racism has no place in our society. Our diversity is our strength and a valuable asset.

The people of Surrey have shown tolerance throughout this entire episode. We can also commend our local community leaders for keeping things calm. Our media treated this matter fairly.

Finally, we can commend the work of our RCMP despite limited resources for successfully bringing this matter to justice.

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### HOMELESSNESS

**Mr. Peter Adams (Peterborough, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I commend the Minister of Labour for her efforts to come to grips with the diverse problems of homelessness. I commend the government for its support of regional forums and research projects designed to identify the real local problems in places like Toronto and Peterborough. The federal government must get a good handle on these matters across the nation before allocating resources.

The time has now come to act. In provinces like Ontario there is no one but the federal government that can make a real impact on homelessness. Where provincial governments are not willing, we must work directly with municipal governments and NGOs to make real changes. Federal resources and know how, in partnership with local groups, can make a huge difference.

*S. O. 31*

Let us act now to help the homeless and those in fear of becoming homeless.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**TEAM CANADA 1972**

**Mr. Guy St-Julien (Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Team Canada 1972 is the Canadian team of the century according to a Canadian Press poll.

Several generations of Canadians have indelible memories of that day in Moscow. The Canadian hockey team, with the passionate support of an entire nation, emerged as champions of the series of the century, as the result of a last-minute 6-5 win over the Soviet Union's elite team.

At the 19 minutes 26 seconds mark in the third period of the eighth game in Moscow, a goal by Paul Henderson carried Canada to victory.

In picking his team, coach Harry Sinden chose a group that would end up in the Hockey Hall of Fame.

Thank you, Yvan Cournoyer, Rodrigue Gilbert, Guy Lapointe, Gilbert Perreault, Jean Ratelle, Ken Dryden, Brad Park, Stan Mikita, Phil Esposito, Frank Mahovlich and Serge Savard.

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[English]

**CANADIAN FARMERS**

**Mr. Howard Hilstrom (Selkirk—Interlake, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, the government is failing farmers and misleading Canadians.

It is failing farm families on the edge of bankruptcy. Farms that have been in families for generations will soon belong to the bank.

• (1405)

The government's AIDA program is not delivering. Only 28% of prairie farmers who have applied for AIDA have received a cheque. What about the other 72%? What kind of Christmas will those families have?

The government is not content with ignoring farmers. It is also trying to mislead Canadians into believing that there is no problem on the farm.

The Prime Minister claims that he has given farmers \$1.5 billion through the AIDA program. This is just not true. Only 15% of the AIDA money has been delivered.

When the Prime Minister is faced with premiers from western Canada, he invents new statistics to hide the crisis. Why can he not fix the problem instead of trying to sweep farmers under the rug?

It is clear that the Liberals do not care about the farm income crisis and farm families will be left out in the cold this winter.

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[Translation]

**HEALTH**

**Mr. Yvon Charbonneau (Anjou—Rivière-des-Prairies, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a moment to call to the attention of the House that November is more or less health month.

November is osteoporosis month, Crohn's and colitis awareness month, cardio-pulmonary resuscitation awareness month, and diabetes month.

What is more, November 15 to 21 is national addiction awareness week, and the week of the 22nd to the 29th is national AIDS awareness week.

I would like to propose to the members of this House that they join with me in paying tribute to the staff and volunteers involved in health-related endeavours during this month of November and throughout the year.

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**LUMBER**

**Mr. René Canuel (Matapédia—Matane, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the agreement between the States and Canada on lumber limits increases in exports by the four provinces it covers.

The agreement expires on March 31, 2001, and the federal government will have to define its position in the coming months. It must support the Conseil pour le libre-échange pour le bois d'oeuvre and demand the restoration of free trade for lumber.

For the good of the regions whose economy relies on forestry, the federal government has no choice but to inform the U.S. government that it wants a return to free trade.

The Bloc Québécois supports the Quebec lumber manufacturers association and the Conseil pour le libre-échange pour le bois d'oeuvre so the industry in Quebec may be given back the opportunity to assume its rightful place in the North American lumber market.

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[English]

**HEALTH CARE**

**Mr. Hec Clouthier (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as we all know, health care is of primary importance to all Canadians. It certainly behooves the health sector to have a strong vibrant leadership.

In my great riding of Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, we are saying goodbye to an ardent, accomplished, admirable administrator. The departure of Sheila Schultz as chief administrative officer

for the Pembroke General Hospital is bittersweet. My riding has lost a person who is a paragon of proficiency in the field of health care. But the community gained immeasurably because with Sheila Schultz at the helm, all patients at the hospital could rest assured that compassionate care was rendered and delivered by her capable team.

It may interest members to know that my colleague the member for Leeds—Grenville was born at the General Hospital.

Of course, Sheila Schultz, in her own modest manner, would say that she had a great teacher in the previous administrator, Sister St. Mark, who taught her everything she knew.

I congratulate Sheila and wish her a happy retirement and good health for years to come.

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### NUCLEAR WASTE

**Mr. David Chatters (Athabasca, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, perhaps it is time the Prime Minister needs takes a reality check. He is forging ahead with his swords into ploughshares plutonium test burn program despite the fact that Canadians do not want to be involved.

Communities along the test route, such as Windsor, Sarnia, Cornwall, Sudbury, Thessalon and Nepean, have all condemned the plutonium shipment. Neither the province of Ontario nor Ontario Hydro wants any part of the plan. Mohawk leaders have made it clear that the shipment of plutonium will not occur on their land. The United States has pulled out and instead has chosen to burn plutonium at home. Even the Liberal dominated foreign affairs committee recommended against the plan.

If the federal government does forge ahead, ignoring almost unanimous opposition to the program, it will not eliminate one nuclear warhead. What we are talking about here is surplus plutonium not the dismantling of nuclear warheads.

The fire has gone out of this test burn scheme and it is time the Prime Minister worked up the moxy to cancel the MOx plan.

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[Translation]

### FILMMAKER PIERRE PERRAULT

**Mrs. Marlene Jennings (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, filmmaker Pierre Perrault, who passed away last June, was paid posthumous tribute yesterday for his writing talents with the unveiling of the governor general's awards for literature.

His book, *Le mal du nord*, describing his trip on the icebreaker *Pierre Radisson*, was honoured in the studies and essays category.

*S. O. 31*

• (1410)

Yolande Simard, the widow of Pierre Perrault, in accepting the award, stressed the vital importance of literacy. She decided to share her prize with the Montreal and Hull literacy centres.

Pierre Perrault had already won the governor general's award on two other occasions, in 1964, for theatre, and in 1975, for poetry.

I would like to congratulate all winners of these awards recognizing or rather honouring their work, which will influence generations to come.

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[English]

### HOUSING

**Ms. Libby Davies (Vancouver East, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, today hundreds of people returned to Parliament Hill calling for immediate action to deal with poverty and homelessness. Is pepper spray the government's only response?

We are facing another winter of misery, hopelessness, sickness and death, but the federal government refuses to recognize housing as a human right.

Blame lies with the Liberal government for abandoning social housing. Blame lies with the Liberal government for passing the buck and abandoning its own promises made in 1999 to build affordable housing.

Right across the country, people are fighting for basic rights for housing, shelter and a living income. We say shame on the federal government for ignoring the plight of the most vulnerable people in our society. Shame on the federal government for stalling, delaying, shuffling and ignoring this critical issue.

The federal NDP has joined the campaign for 1% for housing and a national housing strategy. We will keep up our struggle in solidarity with homeless people and all Canadians in need of adequate housing until the injustice of homelessness is ended.

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[Translation]

### NATIONAL CAPITAL COMMISSION

**Mr. Pierre de Savoye (Portneuf, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, a magnificent booklet entitled *Canadians on the Hill: a continuing tradition* published recently by the inaptly named National Capital Commission is curiously silent about historic events and politicians of the last three decades.

In this publication, history comes to a dead stop in 1967. There is therefore no mention of the official signing ceremony marking the much-hated patriation of the Constitution in 1982. Through omission, this booklet rewrites history.

*S. O. 31*

However, members will recall seeing the Queen, Mr. Trudeau and the current Prime Minister at this distressing historic signing ceremony.

Now, the incriminating event has simply been swept under the carpet. In fact, if we are to believe this booklet, since 1967 Parliament Hill has been little more than a festival venue and sightseeing attraction.

Quite some propaganda to gloss over the risks, and the lessons of the past with respect to the Canadian federal system.

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[*English*]**ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS**

**Mr. Mark Muise (West Nova, PC):** Mr. Speaker, this morning the supreme court dismissed the motion by the West Nova Fishermen's Coalition asking the court to rehear the September 17 ruling in the Donald Marshall Jr. case.

Despite this ruling, the court finally provided clarification on the extent by which natives can exercise their rights to fishing, hunting and gathering.

The court makes it clear that the Marshall ruling does not provide natives with access to logging or mineral rights as was suggested by the federal Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development.

The West Nova Fishermen's Coalition deserves a lot of credit for asking the supreme court for clarification on this issue. It is shameful as to why the federal government did not take it upon itself to seek its own clarification.

We knew that the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans had failed to protect the east coast fishery, however, now we discovered that the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development has been acting upon his own personal interpretation of the Marshall ruling, one that today's supreme court decision has said is totally wrong.

Canadians have lost faith in these two ministers and it is for this reason that we ask for their immediate resignations.

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**LEBANON**

**Mr. Mac Harb (Ottawa Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, November 22 marks the independence day of Lebanon.

On behalf of my colleagues, I call on his Excellency Dr. Assem Jaber, the Lebanese Ambassador to Canada and Minister Issam Naaman to communicate to the people of Lebanon our warmest congratulations.

It is our hope that the year 2000 will bring for the people of Lebanon law and order, prosperity, happiness, full independence

and territorial integrity and a comprehensive, complete and lasting peace.

Long live the friendship that exists between Canada and Lebanon.

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[*Translation*]**RESTORATIVE JUSTICE WEEK**

**Mr. Jacques Saada (Brossard—La Prairie, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this week, the Correctional Service of Canada and communities throughout the country are celebrating Restorative Justice Week.

Restorative justice focuses on victims, the accountability of offenders, and the involvement of citizens in creating healthier, safer communities.

This year, the Correctional Service of Canada established the Restorative Justice Award in memory of Ron Wiebe, most recently the warden of the Elbow Lake and Ferndale correctional institutions. Mr. Wiebe passed away in July after a tough battle with cancer.

• (1415)

Yesterday, at Ferndale Institution, CSC Commissioner Ole Instrup presented the first Ron Wiebe restorative justice award.

The first award went to the Church Council on Justice and Corrections, which is celebrating 25 years of educating and advocating for restorative justice. The second is being awarded posthumously to Eleanor Brown, a senior citizen volunteer who was very involved in this field.

I urge all members to join with me in congratulating the recipients of the first Ron Wiebe award for restorative justice.

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[*English*]**PRESENCE IN GALLERY**

**The Speaker:** We have a number of distinguished guests today and I wish to introduce two of them at this time.

I draw the attention of hon. members to the presence in our gallery of His Excellence Dr. Issam Naaman, Minister of Post and Telecommunications of Lebanon.

I also draw the attention of hon. members to the presence in our gallery of the Honourable Glenn Hagel, Minister of Post-Secondary Education and Skills Training of the province of Saskatchewan.

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

## ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

### EMPLOYMENT

**Miss Deborah Grey (Edmonton North, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, it is time to play who wants to be a millionaire, and our contestant today is the human resources development minister who knows how to play.

She used the transitional jobs fund minister's reserve to drop half a million dollars in her own riding. The fund of course is supposed to be used for areas with at least 12% unemployment and hers had only 6.5%.

Here is the question for our contestant: Why did the human resources minister break the rules? She does not need briefing notes for that.

**Hon. Jane Stewart (Minister of Human Resources Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, indeed the departmental resources are there for stated priorities where there are not funds available.

We have used those for a number of priorities such as youth services projects in British Columbia and in the riding of West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast, the riding of a Reform member, for the west coast railway heritage project.

These funds are there to focus in areas of high unemployment, or where we need a focus on youth services, to ensure that the programming is there for Canadians.

**Miss Deborah Grey (Edmonton North, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, perhaps she has her funds mixed up. I do not think that is the case. The minister seems to have trouble grasping the format here.

We asked a question. She is supposed to answer with an answer. Maybe she would like to, on this one, call a friend or ask the audience.

Here is the question. The transitional jobs fund minister's reserve is (a) a multimillion dollar ministerial slush fund, (b) a way for ministers to get around the rules, (c) a way for ministers to scratch each other's backs, or (d) a special brand of cognac. Which would it be?

**Hon. Jane Stewart (Minister of Human Resources Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the transitional jobs fund was there for areas of high unemployment, to help get Canadians back to work.

In my own riding there were real challenges. If the hon. member would like to look at it, the region of Brantford was decimated by the closure of plants like White Farms and Massey Ferguson. We had an unemployment level that was extraordinarily high and not coming down.

### Oral Questions

As is the case in all regions where the transitional jobs fund has been used, Canadians are working. The unemployment levels are coming down, and the government is working with communities together to make sure that this happens.

**Some hon. members:** More, more.

**The Speaker:** Order, please. I know we all want to hear both the questions and the answers today.

**Miss Deborah Grey (Edmonton North, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, was that her final answer? The unemployment was at 6.5%, as far as I know. That answer is wrong, I am afraid. She should have used a life line, maybe, when she had the chance.

Cabinet ministers do not need to play by the rules so maybe we could give her another chance. She got a half million dollars from the minister's special reserve. That needed more than 12% unemployment, and she knows that hers was 6.5%.

• (1420)

Let us ask her one more time. Here are the options: (a) she broke the rules, (b) she fudged the numbers, (c) who cares, it is other people's money, or (d)—

**The Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Human Resources Development.

**Hon. Jane Stewart (Minister of Human Resources Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is absolutely none of the above.

What we find in this circumstance, as well as in other circumstances across the country including in Reform ridings, is that there are pockets of very high unemployment in particular areas.

The transitional jobs fund is precisely for those areas of high unemployment. Indeed, our unemployment levels are coming down in Brant and in other ridings where the transitional jobs funds have been used.

That is because of the approach of the government to work in partnership at the community level to focus on the issues that will make a difference for citizens in those ridings to use their skills and abilities to diversify the economy. That is what it is about and that is what is happening.

**Mrs. Diane Ablonczy (Calgary—Nose Hill, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, there is a multimillion dollar annual fund within the Department of Human Resources Development called the minister's reserve. There are \$5 million in this reserve. In other words, the minister has been handed her very own multimillion dollar slush fund to spend any way she wants.

This fund really is not about creating jobs, is it? Is it not really about creating special privileges for certain highly placed Liberal ministers and their friends?

*Oral Questions*

**Hon. Jane Stewart (Minister of Human Resources Development, Lib.):** Absolutely not, Mr. Speaker. That is why, as I said earlier, we invested in the riding of the member for West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast with moneys from the minister's reserve.

In fact that is why we invested \$250,000 of reserve funding in the area of British Columbia where there was a strong need for youth employment programs.

If the hon. member would just talk to some of her own caucus members, she would find that money is in their regions and helping the citizens of those communities: young people and people who have not been able to find employment. That is what it is all about. It is a way of managing funds so that we can—

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for Calgary—Nose Hill.

**Mrs. Diane Ablonczy (Calgary—Nose Hill, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, the fact of the matter is that the government is spending millions by overtaxing Canadian workers on EI on the so-called jobs fund.

For months now we have seen misuse and abuse of these public moneys for political purposes in the Prime Minister's riding, and now we find the HRD minister had a cool half million given to her riding even though she could not meet the criteria.

Are Canadians just supposed to accept that a minister of the government does not have to play by the rules?

**Hon. Jane Stewart (Minister of Human Resources Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, do you know what Canadians accept? They accept the fact that the government invested \$300 million in the transitional jobs fund and turned it into \$1.2 billion.

They accept the fact that for every dollar we put into it we leveraged \$9 to create work in ridings of high unemployment across the country.

They accept that this money does not just go into the ridings of Liberal members of parliament but into ridings of members of the NDP, the Tory party, and even of the Reform Party.

What Canadians accept is the fact that our unemployment levels have continued to come down. They are now at the lowest—

[*Translation*]

**The Speaker:** The leader of the Bloc Québécois.

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**TRANSFER PAYMENTS**

**Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the policies of the Minister of Finance are choking the provinces, which are suffering from a flagrant lack of resources to meet their responsibilities. The Minister of Finance prefers to initiate new programs rather than re-establish, in health care and

education, essential services which the public has been denied since 1994.

Will the minister acknowledge once and for all that the priority is to re-establish transfer payments at the 1994 level, as all of the provinces have in fact asked him to do?

• (1425)

**Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we very clearly recognized the priority of Canadians in our latest budgets.

The member referred to health, for example. I have said it repeatedly in the House, there has been an increase of \$11.5 billion over five years to the provinces for health.

I am convinced that we will be discussing this when the ministers of finance meet in ten days' time.

**Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I repeat yet again, he has not given an additional \$11 billion. He cut \$33 billion instead of \$44 billion. This is a fact of his own budgets. It is time he read them.

In the latest throne speech, we got a shopping list of ways to spend the surpluses he accumulated on the backs of the unemployed and the provinces. The provincial finance ministers have clear priorities, as does the public.

Could the Minister of Finance tell us today what his own priorities are?

**Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my priorities are those of the government, which are those of Canadians.

It is clear in the speech from the throne that the provinces are in agreement as well. They endorsed the 50-50 formula. They endorsed the Government of Canada's red book. The throne speech spoke of the infrastructure program. Even the provinces spoke of it in their meeting two days ago.

They also spoke of tax cuts, a reduction in the debt, reflected in the throne speech, reflected—

**The Speaker:** The member for Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot.

**Mr. Yvan Loubier (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, for some months now, the alarm bells have been sounding to warn us of an imminent crisis in the health sector.

Yesterday, all of the country's ministers of finance sent a clear message to the government: We want our money back.

Does the Minister of Finance realize that, in making drastic cuts to transfer payments to the provinces for health care, he has created a situation that is about to explode? Is he waiting to see victims before finally consenting to listen to us?



*Oral Questions*

**Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, once again I repeat, at the request of the provinces, we have restored transfer payments as far as health is concerned. We did so in last year's budget.

But the question is this: Do the provinces intend to restore to the municipalities what they have cut from them?

**Mr. Yvan Loubier (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, there comes a time when enough is enough.

Since 1994, this Minister of Finance has cut \$21 billion from health care and social services. That is a fact. And he is going to cut another \$12 billion by the year 2003. That too is a fact.

Will this minister, who has accumulated \$8 billion in surplus in the first six months, bow to the arguments of the provinces and give back \$3.7 billion to fund health and education? That is what he is being asked, nothing else. alternative?

**Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have just said that within ten days I intend to discuss all this with my provincial counterparts.

Now, when the hon. member speaks of cuts, if they are so busy tearing their hair out over this, at least it is saving them money in hair cuts.

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[English]

**CHILD POVERTY**

**Ms. Alexa McDonough (Halifax, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, we are now one week away from the 10th anniversary of the Broadbent resolution to eliminate child poverty, a resolution supported by every member of the House including the member for LaSalle—Émard. Here is what the Liberals said at the time:

I never hear the finance minister talk about the real deficit in the country—one million kids in poverty.

Will this finance minister rise in his place and resolve today, in his now famous phrase, to eliminate child poverty, come hell or high water?

**Hon. Jane Stewart (Minister of Human Resources Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we talked about this yesterday, but I was reminded that there is probably no one who spoke more eloquently on the issue of children than our Prime Minister in his responses.

In other venues the Prime Minister talks about wanting to do in the early part of the 21st century for Canada's children what we have been able to do as a country for our seniors. I cannot imagine a more strong commitment to Canada's children than the words of our Prime Minister.

**Ms. Alexa McDonough (Halifax, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, it was the finance minister who was in the House. It was the finance

minister who made the solemn pledge, and where is he now on this? Last year the finance minister was prepared to say:

We should establish the elimination of child poverty as a great national objective, not unlike what we did . . .with the deficit.

Why will the finance minister not now commit to targets and timetables to eliminate child poverty, come hell or high water?

• (1430)

**Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the government has made it clear on numerous occasions the terrible tragedy of child poverty and the terrible cost it is going to inflict upon this country in the future. That is why we have brought forth the number of programs we have. We have brought forth the increase in the child tax benefit, the increase in the child care expense deduction and the basic revolution that was represented by Head Start, all of which are initiatives that have been pushed very strongly by the government.

If the NDP is sincere in what it is saying, then it will join the government as we battle to eliminate child poverty against those who do not care.

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**CSIS**

**Mr. Peter MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough, PC):** Mr. Speaker, the solicitor general says that he does not micromanage CSIS and he hides behind a technicality that he is under no obligation to contact the head of SIRC when a breach of national security occurs. CSIS director Ward Elcock obviously has no respect for SIRC at all or for any parliamentarians or even for the minister. The director, aided by the minister, has undermined the role of SIRC and it appears that he deliberately covered up the theft of the CSIS plan.

When will the solicitor general advise us of whether he or the director of CSIS informed the adviser of security and intelligence review for the PCO of this breach of national security?

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as I have indicated a number of times in the House, this is a very serious matter and when the director of CSIS informed me he indicated that the inspector general was conducting an investigation, that CSIS was conducting an investigation and that SIRC, which has access to CSIS files, with a mandate from this House, would be conducting a review. That is exactly what is happening.

**Mr. Peter MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough, PC):** Mr. Speaker, we know it is a serious matter, but when will the minister get smart? He refuses to take any responsibility for what

*Oral Questions*

has taken place, for himself or his employees. The CSIS board has had vacancies since this summer and the inspector general's role was only filled days before this fiasco at the Leaf's game.

Has the solicitor general given any instructions to the director to remedy this complete breakdown in communication within his department?

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am not sure what the member for Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough does not understand about this process. I heard him on CBC Radio yesterday morning when he indicated that SIRC was an independent body and could do the job. I just wish the member for Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough would quit playing politics and trying to score cheap political points in this House.

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**ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS**

**Mr. John Cummins (Delta—South Richmond, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, when the Supreme Court of Canada rendered the Marshall decision last September, the minister of Indian affairs sent shock waves through resource industries in this country by suggesting that the judgment gave natives treaty access to forest, mineral and natural gas resources. This morning the court clearly stated that these other resources were simply not addressed by the Marshall decision.

Given the court's clarification, is the minister prepared to withdraw his irresponsible and inaccurate statement?

**Hon. Robert D. Nault (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the reality of it is that the courts did say very clearly that we should be negotiating with first nations people. That is the position of the government, not the position of the opposition, and we will continue to negotiate.

**Mr. John Cummins (Delta—South Richmond, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, regardless of what the minister says, the Marshall decision applies only to a Mi'kmaq treaty right to carry on a small scale commercial eel fishery. Most importantly, it acknowledges non-Aboriginals' right to fish. Will the minister of fisheries acknowledge the right of all Canadians to fish and develop one set of regulations for all Canadians?

**Hon. Harbance Singh Dhaliwal (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, when the court ruled today it totally rejected the position of the Reform Party, which asks for a hearing. Second, the court has reaffirmed the government's position, the government's strategy and the way the government has handled this.

• (1435)

Let me read the quote from the courts:

As this and other courts have pointed out on many occasions, the process of accommodation of the treaty right may be best resolved by consultation and negotiation of a modern agreement for participation in specified resources by the Mi'kmaq rather than by litigation.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**TRANSFER PAYMENTS**

**Mr. Daniel Turp (Beauharnois—Salaberry, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Canadian federation is chronically dysfunctional—those with the money are not providing any services, and those providing the services have no money.

In the meantime, the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs is worrying about the referendum practices of the Government of Quebec rather than devoting his energy to resolving this fundamental problem that has been identified by all premiers.

Would the minister not be better advised to do what he was appointed to do and speak to his colleague, the Minister of Finance, so that action is taken to right this fiscal imbalance?

**Hon. Stéphane Dion (President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is very important that our federation be in good economic health. It is extremely heartening to note that we are having some very healthy discussions on how to use surpluses.

I want to point out to the member that the former leader of the Bloc Québécois once said that it was necessary to leave the federation because it was on the brink of bankruptcy. Well, this federation is one of the healthiest countries in the world economically and together we are talking about ways to use the surpluses.

**Mr. Daniel Turp (Beauharnois—Salaberry, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, this former leader of the Bloc Québécois is also a premier who, along with nine other premiers, has harsh words for the government's use of the surpluses.

Instead of retreating to his ivory tower and dreaming up plans to limit the powers of Quebec's National Assembly, would the minister not be better advised to have a word with the Minister of Finance so that the next federal-provincial conference focuses on the real problem: getting the money to those who provide the services?

**Hon. Stéphane Dion (President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, credit is due many of the provincial governments for making it back to a surplus position before the Government of Canada did, for beginning to lower their taxes ahead of us, and for having a financial health that is comparable to ours.

If it has taken certain governments, and one of them in particular, longer to achieve this, perhaps a few years of referendum madness are responsible.

*Oral Questions*

[English]

**RCMP**

**Mr. Jim Abbott (Kootenay—Columbia, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, it seems that all of the departments under the solicitor general have serious problems hanging on to their briefcases. We have now learned that the RCMP had information stolen from one of its cars, which put the lives of informants and their sources in grave danger.

It is clear that the minister did not do anything about the CSIS briefcase. Did the minister and his department consider the RCMP stolen briefcase a serious threat to the lives of the informants and what action did he take?

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, if my hon. colleague is referring to the case that was stolen in 1995, the commissioner assured me that an investigation into this did take place. He also assured me that the necessary steps were taken.

**Mr. Jim Abbott (Kootenay—Columbia, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, the question then is, if serious steps were taken and this is yet another event in the life of this minister in the departments of the solicitor general, why is it that we have yet another case missing from another car? I do not really understand.

The people who put their lives on the line for the minister and his ministries want to know why it is that his ministry acts like a sieve. Why are their names in danger, in public, as a result of his department and his department's inaction?

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this is a very serious matter and the government takes this matter very seriously. That is why when the director informed me he told me that the inspector general was conducting an investigation and CSIS was conducting an investigation. And SIRC, which has a mandate from this place to conduct a review, is doing that very thing.

Why will my hon. colleague not just let the process work?

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE**

**Mrs. Pierrette Venne (Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, today we learned that not only were documents stolen from the Canadian Security Intelligence Service, but that lists of informants were also stolen from the RCMP.

• (1440)

How does the minister explain the fact that the RCMP has lost sensitive documents, some of which could endanger the lives of people who co-operate with the police, without the government even being informed of such an incident?

[English]

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I believe if my hon. colleague was listening, if she was talking about the brief case that disappeared in 1995, I just responded to that question.

[Translation]

**Mrs. Pierrette Venne (Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, does the minister not realize that his cavalier attitude regarding such a serious issue has everybody concerned about his understanding of his role and of the security component that is involved?

To show that he clearly understands his role, could the minister tell us when he intends to demand the resignation of the heads of these agencies?

[English]

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as I indicated, the commissioner of the RCMP indicated to me that there was an investigation. He also indicated to me that the documents in the case were not project specific and they did not involve national security.

\* \* \*

**CANADIAN FORCES**

**Mr. Art Hanger (Calgary Northeast, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister opened a new \$15 million armoury in his riding, claiming it was a military necessity, that the regiment there had been expanding since 1936.

The fact of the matter is that the membership in that regiment has actually dropped from 236 to 176. The number of privates has gone from 106 to a mere 31.

Why did this shrinking regiment require a state of the art \$15 million armoury just before the 1997 election?

**Hon. Arthur C. Eggleton (Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, first, the hon. member has not provided all of the information about this armoury. He is talking about one regiment, one unit. However, there are six units that occupy that armoury.

If a family goes from one person to six people it obviously needs more room; so it is in the case of the armoury. The previous armoury was built in 1950. They have outgrown it. Yes, there are some fluctuations, but there are four cadet corps there with some 150 over and above the number that he is talking about.

Furthermore, this was first approved in April 1993.

**Mr. Art Hanger (Calgary Northeast, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, the truth of the matter is that the defence minister is not giving out all

*Oral Questions*

of the information. The project was terminated by the Department of National Defence in 1996. According to the department, it was suggested that there be no change in this armoury until the year 2015.

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

**The Speaker:** Order, please. The hon. member for Calgary Northeast may again begin his question if he would like.

**Mr. Art Hanger:** Mr. Speaker, the truth of the matter is that the defence minister is not portraying the whole picture either. The project was terminated by DND in 1996. It suggested that the existing armoury was viable until the year 2015.

The Prime Minister insisted that the new armoury was necessary in 1997 when he was facing a tough election campaign. He knew our troops were desperately needing new combat clothing and new equipment.

How can the defence minister call this a military necessity?

**Hon. Arthur C. Eggleton (Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as I was saying, this was first approved during the days of the Mulroney government in 1993, when the current Prime Minister was not even the member for Shawinigan.

Second, it was not terminated in 1996. It was put on hold at that time because of budget cuts. In 1997 it was put back on, not politically, it was put back on by the army which said it needed it because of the six units.

There is one other thing I think members should know. The hon. member talks about the \$15 million for the Shawinigan armoury which is very much needed. What about the contract for \$164 million awarded to Harris Energy Control Systems Canada Inc. in the riding of Calgary Northeast?

\* \* \*

• (1445)

[Translation]

**PLUTONIUM IMPORTS**

**Ms. Jocelyne Girard-Bujold (Jonquière, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday, Transport Canada released a report in which it gives the green light to the importation of plutonium-based fuel into Canada.

The government keeps repeating that the public's short and long term safety are not at risk. However, the public's strong opposition to this project clearly shows that Canadians do not support it.

My question is for the Minister of Natural Resources. Will the minister recognize that the Seaborn panel, which spent nine years reviewing the nuclear issue, concluded that any solution must have strong public support, and will the minister finally allow a public debate on plutonium imports?

[English]

**Hon. Ralph E. Goodale (Minister of Natural Resources and Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, unfortunately I think the hon. member is confusing two quite different things.

She referred to the report of the Seaborn panel, which of course refers to the management of nuclear fuel waste over the long term, to which the government has responded and further action will be forthcoming reasonably shortly.

As for MOx fuel, that is fully covered under the provisions of the Atomic Energy Control Act and the Transportation of Dangerous Goods Act. We have made absolutely certain that every provision of that legislation is in force and will be respected in order to protect public health and safety.

\* \* \*

**KOSOVO**

**Ms. Jean Augustine (Etobicoke—Lakeshore, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister for International Co-operation.

It has been months since Canada deployed troops in Kosovo to bring peace and security to that region. However, there is still much work to be done by the international community. Could the minister tell us what Canada is doing to help in that rebuilding effort?

**Hon. Maria Minna (Minister for International Cooperation, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Canada recently announced \$100 million in new funding for rehabilitation of Kosovo and the Balkans. Of that money, \$11.2 million is being used for health, education, shelter and associated demining programs.

Today a further \$3.7 million is being announced by the government to be used in the areas of health, education and social services. One example is that \$1 million will go to the United Nations for fuel for heating systems in Pristina which will provide about 40% of the city's heat, including hospitals and schools.

\* \* \*

**CANADA ELECTIONS ACT**

**Mr. Ted White (North Vancouver, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, an elections act should be politically neutral, supported by the public, the chief electoral officer and all the parties in this House. But the government House leader's new elections act is politically biased, opposed by the official opposition and criticized by the chief electoral officer as unfit for a third world country.

Why is the government not modernizing the elections act, making it more democratic, instead of persisting with a patronage ridden, gag law contaminated piece of yesterday's legislation?

*Oral Questions*

**Hon. Don Boudria (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I guess the hon. member was not paying attention to the answers yesterday, so let me try it again.

First, the Lortie commission in 1991 did not recommend changing from the present formula of appointing electoral officers in ridings. Second, this is the same formula utilized in six provinces in addition to the one used by the House of Commons at the present time. Third, the Chief Electoral Officer of Ontario has indicated that it would take an additional 19 bureaucrats in Ontario alone, probably 50 at the national level, to administer that which he—

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for North Vancouver.

**Mr. Ted White (North Vancouver, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, the minister was not paying attention to the questions yesterday.

Bill C-2 slaps a gag law on voters, prevents the Chief Electoral Officer from testing new voting technologies, reinstates an illogical 50 candidate rule, perpetuates an offensive system of patronage appointments by the Prime Minister and cannot prevent cats and dogs from being registered as voters and candidates.

The bill fails every reasonable test for political neutrality and fairness. Why does the minister not just throw the bill away and start again from scratch?

**Hon. Don Boudria (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member across the way can make accusations where he likes in his usual partisan way, but for him to accuse all returning officers in Canada of putting cats and dogs on the voters list is an unjustified and unwarranted attack against hundreds of civil servants who are doing a great job for Canadians.

\* \* \*

• (1450)

**HEALTH**

**Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis (Winnipeg North Centre, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, last evening Premier Klein went on TV to tell Albertans that he will openly defy the principles of medicare by allowing the development of a private, for profit hospital system. He said he intends to allow public tax dollars to be siphoned off directly into the pockets of private health corporations.

Surely that was not the intention of the architects of medicare. Surely this is not Canadians' interpretation of the Canada Health Act.

I want to ask the health minister, does he believe that for profit private hospitals are consistent with the principles of the Canada Health Act?

**Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the premier spoke last night and today we received a policy statement which we are looking at right now.

Let me make something crystal clear so that I can remove any doubt from the member's mind. We will protect the Canada Health Act. We will protect the Canadian system of medicare. We will protect its letter and we will protect its spirit. Neither this government nor this Minister of Health will ever permit the development of a private parallel system of health care in this country.

**Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis (Winnipeg North Centre, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, whenever the minister answers a question on health care I am always tempted to ask, is that all there is? There is lots of talk but no action.

Canadians are depending upon the government to protect public health care. The health minister has options. If he is really serious about protecting health care he could and he should use the process set out by the social union agreement to challenge that kind of approach. He can do that now. Will he do it? Will he use the social union agreement to fight for public health care?

**Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, fighting for public health care is my full time job. I do little else. I will continue to do that.

The proposals that came from Alberta arrived today. We are looking at them. We will examine them. Our perspective is very simple. We will not allow the development of a private parallel system of health care in this country, not in Alberta and not in any province. This government is committed to public medicare in Canada.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**CSIS**

**Mr. André Bachand (Richmond—Arthabaska, PC):** Mr. Speaker, in the matter of the stolen documents, the solicitor general is, you know, rather like the stolen documents. He sits in a back seat. He does not move. He waits for someone to collect him and deliver him safely.

I would like to ask the solicitor general, sitting in a back seat and not attending to the matter, whether he will finally take some disciplinary action and suspend the agent and the director of the Canadian Security Intelligence Service.

[English]

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague should be aware that I have no role in internal disciplinary actions within CSIS.

*Oral Questions*

I understand this is a very serious matter and it is being addressed by the appropriate bodies.

[Translation]

**Mr. André Bachand (Richmond—Arthabaska, PC):** Mr. Speaker, the solicitor general says he looked after it and that he cannot intervene in internal matters. But he did not inform the PMO and he did not inform the president of the Privy Council so the matter would be known and the whole thing examined.

I would ask the solicitor general, if he is incapable of looking after the matter, why he does not make like the documents and disappear?

[English]

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am fully aware that this is a very serious matter. The government is fully aware that this is a very serious matter. That is why the director of CSIS came to me and indicated that the inspector general was conducting an investigation and CSIS was conducting an investigation.

My hon. colleague is also well aware that SIRC has access to CSIS files and will be conducting a review. That is what is happening and that is what should be happening.

\* \* \*

**TRADE**

**Ms. Sarmite Bulte (Parkdale—High Park, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister for International Trade.

Will the minister tell the House to what extent will the lesser developed countries be considered in the launch of the Seattle round of the World Trade Organization negotiations?

**Hon. Pierre S. Pettigrew (Minister for International Trade, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, trade does lead to development and that is what history is teaching us.

Canada and the world know that development will be at the heart of the next round of negotiations. We will work to fight the exclusion and promote development of those countries through trade.

With my colleague the Minister for International Co-operation, we will work at capacity building so that developing countries can indeed participate fully in a rules based international trade system. Canada will also promote at Seattle better coherence between the WTO and the other international organizations in favour of developing countries.

• (1455)

**THE ENVIRONMENT**

**Mr. Rahim Jaffer (Edmonton—Strathcona, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, two weeks ago the member for Stoney Creek, who is also chair of the Liberal's economic development committee, publicly called on the government to remove Nick Mulder from the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency's Red Hill Creek review panel. In a November 4 letter he wrote "It appears Mr. Mulder is simultaneously serving as a lobbyist to CEAA and performing contract services for the same agency".

Why has the government not taken any action in response to serious allegations made by one of its own senior members?

**Hon. David Anderson (Minister of the Environment, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the answer is quite simple. Based on the information provided, there is no conflict of interest.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

**Mr. Yvan Bernier (Bonaventure—Gaspé—Îles-de-la-Madeleine—Pabok, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the minister responsible for the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec.

The closure of the pulp and paper mill in Chandler and the cessation of mining activities at Mines Gaspé have hit the Gaspé particularly hard. The Government of Quebec is doing everything it can to ensure that a previously signed investment agreement is honoured, which would prevent the mill from having to be shut down definitively.

Is the minister prepared to come up with funding for the operation of the "Baie des Chaleurs" railway, as the Chandler municipal council is requesting, and thus provide transitional support while the Chandler mill is being converted?

**Hon. John Manley (Minister of Industry, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would point out to the member that, on November 10, the Secretary of State responsible for the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec visited the Gaspé and met with concerned citizens.

On that date, we undertook to provide concrete support, such as feasibility studies for potential projects, in order to help identify new job creation avenues.

\* \* \*

[English]

**AGRICULTURE**

**Mr. Dick Proctor (Palliser, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I have a communique from a Saskatchewan resident for the agriculture

*Oral Questions*

minister. Saskatoon resident Dennis Gruending notes that agriculture was the number one issue in Monday's byelection in Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar.

Given the particularly dismal results of the Liberal candidate in that byelection, Dennis Gruending asks the minister of agriculture whether he will now change his government's disastrous policies and introduce a transitional payment and provide some real assistance for prairie farmers.

**Hon. Lyle Vanclief (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would suggest to the hon. member that he demonstrate, and he can very easily, the changes that the government has already made and continues to make to the program. More changes have been made in response to the requests of the safety nets advisory committee and the industry earlier this month. If the province of Saskatchewan would match it as it has all the time, this would put over \$100 million more into the support of those in Saskatchewan who need the help.

\* \* \*

## CSIS

**Mr. John Herron (Fundy—Royal, PC):** Mr. Speaker, this is what we know. Highly classified CSIS documents were stolen at a Leaf's hockey game. We also know that the CSIS employee responsible has not been disciplined and is still being paid by the Canadian taxpayer. CSIS director Ward Alcock, who unilaterally chose not to advise SIRC, is still being paid by the Canadian taxpayer. In addition, Alcock chose to run and leave the country the day the story broke.

Will the minister finally demonstrate that incompetence will not be tolerated at CSIS and that the next papers the CSIS employee and Alcock take out of the CSIS offices will be their termination papers?

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this is a very serious matter. I wish a lot of my colleagues would quit playing politics with this issue. When the director of CSIS came to me, he took appropriate action. He conducted an investigation. The inspector general conducted an investigation. As I have said many times, all the appropriate action has been taken.

\* \* \*

[*Translation*]

## CANADA FOUNDATION FOR INNOVATION

**Mr. Bernard Patry (Pierrefonds—Dollard, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Secretary of State for Science, Research and Development.

The recent economic and fiscal update has highlighted the great importance of knowledge and innovation.

Can the minister give us an overview of the amounts currently invested by the Canada Foundation for Innovation and their impact on Canadian universities?

• (1500)

**Hon. Gilbert Normand (Secretary of State (Science, Research and Development), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to inform the House that the Canada Foundation for Innovation recently invested \$350 million in support of infrastructure projects in Canadian universities, in order to assist researchers in undertaking new projects in all sectors.

Recently as well, the Canada Foundation for Innovation and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council announced plans to establish a Canadian digital library project linking all Canadian universities on the Internet.

Innovation is in good shape in Canada, which is why a congress on innovation will be held here in Ottawa on November 30 and December 1 and 2.

\* \* \*

[*English*]

## PRESENCE IN GALLERY

**The Speaker:** Today we have a very special group of Canadians with us.

I draw to the attention of hon. members the presence in the gallery of a group of Canadians of extraordinary talent and accomplishment in the field of Canadian literature. They have devoted their energies toward enriching the cultural life of Canada.

[*Translation*]

They are the recipients of the Governor General's Literary Award, that most prestigious of awards to Canada's great writers.

[*English*]

I will call out the names of the 11 recipients who are with us today. I know many members know them personally, but I would like you to hold your applause until all of them are standing in the gallery.

The recipients are: Lise Tremblay, Jan Zwicky, Herménégilde Chiasson, Michael Healey, Jean Marc Dalpé, Marq de Villiers, Rachna Gilmore, Charlotte Gingras, Gary Clement, Stéphane Jorisch and Patricia Claxton.

These are our writers.

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

**The Speaker:** Colleagues, I invite you to a reception in my chambers, Room 222-N, for our recipients in about 15 or 20 minutes.

*Routine Proceedings***ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS**

• (1505)

*[English]***GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS**

**Mr. Derek Lee (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 five petitions.

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**INTERPARLIAMENTARY DELEGATIONS**

**The Deputy Speaker:** Pursuant to Standing Order 34, I have the honour to present to the House a report from the Canada-United Kingdom Interparliamentary Association concerning a visit to London in the United Kingdom in July 1999.

*[Translation]*

**Hon. Charles Caccia (Davenport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 34(1), I have the honour to present to the House in both official languages, the first report of the Canada-Europe Parliamentary Association which represented Canada at the meeting of the Council of Europe's commission on the environment, land use and local authorities, held in Paris on May 21, 1999.

Pursuant to Standing Order 34(1), I also have the honour to table, in both official languages, the second report of the Canada-Europe Parliamentary Association. The association represented Canada at meetings of the Council of Europe parliamentary assembly's economic affairs and development committee, at the Paris headquarters of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) on 18 June, and in the parliamentary assembly's plenary session in Strasbourg from June 21 to June 25, 1999.

*[English]*

Finally, pursuant to Standing Order 34(1), I have the honour to present to the House, in both official languages, the third report of the Canada-Europe Parliamentary Association which represented Canada at the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly's plenary session in Strasbourg from September 20 to 25, 1999.

\* \* \*

**FOOD AND DRUGS ACT**

**Mr. Tom Wappel (Scarborough Southwest, Lib.)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-319, an act to amend the Food and Drugs Act (nutrition information on foods).

He said: Mr. Speaker, my bill requires that all packaged foods, bulk foods and fruits and vegetables sold at retail to have to indicate the amount of certain nutrients that are in them, in particular calories, fats, trans fats, cholesterol and the like.

The purpose for this is that there is currently no law requiring this information to be given to consumers and without a law manufacturers and packagers have been slow to educate consumers about their products. Consumers armed with this knowledge of the nutritional value of the foods they consume can make far more educated choices, helping them to improve their diets, their health and helping them to reduce serious illness.

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

\* \* \*

• (1510)

**CRIMINAL CODE**

**Mr. Tom Wappel (Scarborough Southwest, Lib.)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-320, an act to amend the Criminal Code (offence committed outside Canada).

He said: Mr. Speaker, currently section 6.2 of the criminal code specifies that persons are not to be convicted of offences committed outside of Canada. There are a few exceptions, such as war crimes, hostage-taking and the like.

My bill would amend section 7 to provide that everyone who commits an act outside Canada that if committed in Canada would constitute an offence under the criminal code, shall be deemed to have committed the act in Canada if he or she is a Canadian citizen, a permanent resident or present in Canada after the commission of the act.

The tragic inspiration for the bill was the true case of a husband and wife vacationing on a Caribbean island where the husband assaulted the wife. They were both Canadians living in Canada. They returned to Canada and the husband was not brought to justice for the violent act against his wife because it occurred outside Canada.

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

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**CRIMINAL CODE**

**Mr. Rick Casson (Lethbridge, Ref.)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-321, an act to amend the Criminal Code to provide for the forfeiture of property relating to child pornography crimes.

He said: Mr. Speaker, it is my distinct pleasure to rise today to retable my private member's bill on behalf of the people of Lethbridge and indeed all the children of Canada. I thank those in the House for supporting it and also those in southern Alberta who have sent me notes and cards of appreciation.



My bill is an amendment to the criminal code that will allow the courts to convict a person of an offence under the child pornography provisions of the criminal code to order the forfeiture of anything used in the commission of an offence under this provision.

In the last parliament, this bill received widespread support and garnered praise from many different sectors. It has been mentioned on a continent-wide syndicated radio program. It has been endorsed by the Canadian Police Association and has the support of the Ontario Provincial Police child pornography unit, Project P.

I am hopeful that as I continue to canvass my colleagues in the House that this support may be recognized and reflected.

Before closing, I would like to recognize the heroic efforts of all those law enforcement officers who fight the spread of child pornography and who have been instrumental in developing this bill. I especially recognize Detective Inspector Bob Matthews of the Ontario Provincial Police, Project P, the child pornography unit.

These are turbulent times for those fighting child pornography. So to all those who continue this fight, keep up the good work. We are with you.

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

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### INCOME TAX ACT

**Mr. Keith Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, Ref.)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-322, an act to amend the Income Tax Act and the National Defence Act (rental of a residence).

He said: Mr. Speaker, this bill comes from the men and women who work at MARPAC in my riding of Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca. Indeed, it is for defence workers all across the country.

Although the government has given the military men and women a raise, it has not rolled back their rents and is making their accommodation assistance allowance less than what it was before.

The bill will enable the government to give the men and women up to a \$400 tax deduction on the rents that they pay and will also roll back the rents on the private-married quarters to what they were in January 1995.

The bill will give some badly needed economic help to the men and women in our defence department who are suffering right now in so many ways. It is a way for the government to get the resources without necessarily asking for more money. It will put money in the pockets of these people who are giving their lives and putting their lives on the line so we can live in peace and security in our country.

### Routine Proceedings

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

\* \* \*

● (1515)

### COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

#### FISHERIES AND OCEANS

**Mr. Derek Lee (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, there have been discussions among the House leaders and I think you would find unanimous consent for the adoption of the following motion:

That the Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans be authorized to travel to Miramichi, New Brunswick, on Friday, November 26, 1999, for the purpose of its study on the implications of the September 17 Marshall ruling of the Supreme Court on the management of the fisheries in the Atlantic region.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Does the hon. parliamentary secretary have the unanimous consent of the House to propose this motion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The House has heard the terms of the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

(Motion agreed to)

\* \* \*

### PETITIONS

#### COMMUNITY TELEVISION

**Ms. Libby Davies (Vancouver East, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in the House to present a petition containing 1,151 names to save independent community television.

The petition points out that the role of community channels should be to provide accessible and open use by the community and not at the favour of corporations.

The petition calls upon parliament to provide a legal definition of community television to ensure access to funds and full accessibility for community use and expression.

#### TELEPHONE SERVICES

**Mr. Peter Adams (Peterborough, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise again to speak the matter of a lack of telephones in a part of Peterborough County.

It is extraordinary in the modern age that a location in southern Ontario, close to the city of Peterborough, has telephone poles but has never had telephones. This affects families in situations of emergency or their children accessing the Internet, as so many other children are doing, and so on.

*Routine Proceedings*

This is in a country which pioneered telephones and telephone service, and which prides itself on being the most connected country in the world.

The petitioners call upon parliament to intervene on behalf of these people through relevant federal departments, the CRTC and Bell Canada.

## WATER EXPORTS

**Mr. Peter Adams (Peterborough, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have a petition from citizens of Peterborough who are concerned about the export of bulk water.

They point out that there are corporations which already have plans to export 50 billion litres of Canadian lake water per year. Trade rules dictate that once Canada begins to export its lake water no limit can be placed on the amount exported.

The petitioners say this water belongs to the people of Canada, not to private corporations. Exports of such water bring environmental devastation. Therefore they call upon parliament to enact legislation which prohibits large scale water exports.

## CAMBODIA

**Mr. Keith Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, on behalf of Mrs. Sanrin Son and 157 other Canadians, I present a petition that calls for the genocidal dictator of Cambodia, Mr. Hun Sen, who has committed human rights abuses, war crimes, genocide, and is implicated in the murder of Mrs. Piseth Pilika of Cambodia, to be tried for war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide.

This brings to the attention of the House the egregious situation taking place in Cambodia today and calls for justice to be served.

## TAXATION

**Mr. Gurbax Singh Malhi (Bramalea—Gore—Malton—Springdale, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36, I have the honour to present the following petitions signed by 26 concerned individuals.

Revenue Canada does not allow members of a tradesmen union to deduct employment expenses if they have to work out of town because the contractor is considered local. Therefore, the petitioners pray and call upon parliament to amend subparagraphs 8(1)(h) and 8(1)(h)(i) of the Income Tax Act to read:

(h) Travel Expenses—where the taxpayer, in the year,

(1) was ordinarily required to carry on the duties of office or employment away from the:

(a) employer's place of business or in different places, or

(b) where the taxpayer is a member of a trade union and through placement is employed by an employer outside the area of the union local.

• (1520)

## WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

**Mr. John Solomon (Regina—Lumsden—Lake Centre, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I have two petitions to present this afternoon pursuant to Standing Order 36.

The first one is from petitioners from Saskatoon, my riding of Regina—Lumsden—Lake Centre, Colonsay, Dalmeny and a number of other communities in Saskatchewan. It is signed by almost 1,000 citizens.

They say that the constitution of the World Health Organization provides for membership to be open to all states. They are asking that the goal of the citizens of the world to be healthy should not be blocked by politics and that the people of Taiwan hope to advance forward in public health and medical treatment along with the rest of the people of the world.

They are therefore calling upon the Government of Canada and the Parliament of Canada to support Taiwan's membership in the World Health Organization.

## RIGHTS OF CHILDREN

**Mr. John Solomon (Regina—Lumsden—Lake Centre, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, my second petition is signed by over 2,000 petitioners from my constituency in Regina as well as by petitioners from Moose Jaw, Saskatoon, Grenfell, Edenwold, Odessa, Weyburn, Lumsden and a number of other places.

They are very concerned about the children of Canada. They believe the children of Canada should have the right to be parented by both parents. They maintain that mandatory equal shared parenting should be the starting point after divorce, replacing the current custody and access regime.

They also believe there is no reason for the Minister of Justice to further study this issue, least of all until May 2002, and that the prolonging of this only abuses children and they suffer further.

They are asking parliament to pass legislation immediately to incorporate these rights of children and principles. They are demanding as well the resignation of the Minister of Justice.

## GASOLINE PRODUCTS

**Mrs. Rose-Marie Ur (Lambton—Kent—Middlesex, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36, I am honoured to present a petition signed by residents of Ottawa, Nepean, Kanata and Manotick.

They urge the government to support the auto industry in its clean fuel program and to implement new fuel standards for gasoline with zero MMT.

## IMMIGRATION

**Mr. John Duncan (Vancouver Island North, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, in addition to earlier petitions I have delivered on this subject, I have a petition signed by 75 individuals from my riding.

The petitioners are asking parliament to enact immediate changes to Canada's immigration laws governing refugees to allow for the deportation without delay of obvious and blatant abuses of the system.

## THE SNOWBIRDS

**Mr. Dick Proctor (Palliser, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, several hundred petitioners have signed petitions in regard to the Snowbirds.

They come largely from Moose Jaw but I also note Caronport, Southey, Mossbank, Mortlach, as well as communities out of province like Winnipeg, Keswick and Barry, Ontario.

They are calling on parliament to take the action necessary to ensure that stable funding for the 431 air demonstration squadron continues for the foreseeable future.

## HERBAL ALTERNATIVES

**Mr. Peter Stoffer (Sackville—Musquodoboit Valley—Eastern Shore, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, again I stand in the House to present a petition, pursuant to Standing Order 36, on one of the finest pieces of legislation to hit the House, Bill C-233. It happens to be one of my own bills.

People from Prince Edward Island, Cape Breton, Toronto, the lovely city of Halifax et cetera, basically state what they would like to see government do.

They would like to have an income tax deduction for any people who are allergic or highly sensitive to prescription medical drugs. If a medical practitioner prescribes them an herbal alternative they should be able to claim that herbal alternative as a tax deduction as a proper medical expense in lieu of a prescription drug.

It is a great honour for me to rise in the House to present this valuable petition on such a worthy bill.

## THE CONSTITUTION

**Mr. Paul Forseth (New Westminster—Coquitlam—Burnaby, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36, I am pleased to present three petitions today.

In the first one the petitioners oppose any amendments to the charter of rights and freedoms or any other federal legislation which would provide for the exclusion of reference to the supremacy of God.

• (1525)

## IMMIGRATION

**Mr. Paul Forseth (New Westminster—Coquitlam—Burnaby, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, the second petition is a request for parliament

*Routine Proceedings*

to amend the Immigration Act, the justice system and the constitution so that individuals who have come to Canada as immigrants or refugees can have their temporary Canadian status revoked and be deported should they be convicted of terrorist acts or illegal drug taking.

## TAXATION

**Mr. Paul Forseth (New Westminster—Coquitlam—Burnaby, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, constituents of mine are calling for parliament to amend the federal tax code to ensure equitable treatment for all families and children.

**Mr. Inky Mark (Dauphin—Swan River, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to present a petition on behalf of 15,794 Canadians. The petition calls for the government to scrap the tape tax.

As we already know Canadians are overtaxed. This tape tax will cost consumers an additional \$65 million and will add between a 72% to 200% increase on the rental of a single video. The petitioners call on the government to remove this very unnecessary tape tax.

\* \* \*

## QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

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

**The Deputy Speaker:** Is that agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

\* \* \*

## MOTIONS FOR PAPERS

**Mr. Derek Lee (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Notice of Motion for the Production of Papers No. P-3 in the name of the hon. member for Brandon—Souris is acceptable to the government with the reservations stated in the reply, and the documents are tabled immediately.

Motion No. P-3

That a humble Address be presented to Her Excellency praying that she will cause to be laid before this House copies of all documents, reports, minutes of meetings, notes, memos and correspondence between the Minister of Agriculture and the United States Agriculture Secretary during the period of October 1, 1997, to October 5, 1998.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Is that agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

(Motion agreed to)

*The Address*

**Mr. Derek Lee:** Mr Speaker, I ask that all other Notices of Motions for the Production of Papers be allowed to stand.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Is that agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

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## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

### YOUTH CRIMINAL JUSTICE ACT

BILL C-3—NOTICE OF TIME ALLOCATION

**Hon. Don Boudria (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

An agreement could not be reached under the provisions of Standing Order 78(1) or Standing Order 78(2) with respect to the second reading stage of Bill C-3, an act in respect of criminal justice for young persons and to amend and repeal other acts.

Under the provisions of Standing Order 78(3) I now give notice that a minister of the crown will propose at the next sitting a motion to allot a specific number of days or hours for the consideration and disposal of proceedings at the said stage.

\* \* \*

### SPEECH FROM THE THRONE

RESUMPTION OF DEBATE ON ADDRESS IN REPLY

The House resumed from November 3 consideration of the motion for an address to Her Excellency the Governor General of Canada in reply to her speech at the opening of the session.

**Hon. Arthur C. Eggleton (Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to participate in this debate and to express my pride in the contribution that the Canadian forces is making to the principles outlined in the Speech from the Throne.

The Canadian forces have an important role to play in that agenda. It contributes both to our prosperity and to our security. It plays a vital role in the lives of thousands of young Canadians and it spurs innovation in our economy.

Time and time again the Canadian forces have responded admirably to domestic emergencies from the ice storm to major

floods and search and rescue missions. Canadians have been able to count on the men and women of the Canadian forces when disaster and suffering have struck closest to home.

The Speech from the Throne also reaffirms Canada's position in the world as a nation committed to enhancing human security, and no arm of government makes a greater contribution to advancing those goals than the Canadian forces.

[Translation]

The challenge for us is to have the means necessary to sustain our efforts, that is to ensure that our actions accurately reflect our commitments.

[English]

While the end of the cold war has reduced the threat of global war, the demand for assistance in building peace and human security has increased dramatically. There are more democracies, it is true, but many are fragile and require nurturing. The world is changing rapidly. It is changing fundamentally and profoundly. Power is more diffuse. Consensus is more difficult. Threats to human security are numerous.

● (1530)

In such an environment Canada has a responsibility and indeed a desire to play a part.

We will make the greatest contribution to peace and human rights abroad by making sure that we have a co-ordinated approach right here at home. For example, we need the efforts of organizations such as CIDA to build the foundations for stability and development around the world. We need the involvement of human rights organizations to ensure that basic values are recognized and basic standards are preserved. We need the diplomatic and trade efforts of the Departments of Foreign Affairs and International Trade to open markets, to extend the benefits of liberalized trade and to bring Canada's unique perspective of security, peace and human rights.

We need strong Canadian forces. History teaches us that we cannot hope to maintain peace and security without the ability to back up our commitments, if necessary with military strength. It is vital that we strike the right balance as a country between the soft power initiatives needed to advance human security and the hard military capabilities needed to back up this commitment, with action when necessary. It is not a question of either/or; Canada must have both.

We were reminded of this reality most recently in Kosovo. This was an important engagement, not only for the objectives that were realized, but also for the message that was sent. Our actions declared in no uncertain terms that mass murder and mass expulsion of citizens are acts of moral repugnance, not the prerogative of a sovereign state.

*The Address*

[Translation]

Our words condemn such action, but it is military force that puts a stop to it.

[English]

It was the Canadian forces, in partnership with our NATO allies, using the tools and training we have given them, who risked their lives to defend the values that we as Canadians espouse. It is the Canadian forces, along with many other countries and aid organizations, which are now working to restore stability and rebuild peace and a civil society in Kosovo.

Let me be clear. Those who would advance human security must be able to fight to protect the human rights and values we espouse, where necessary, keep the peace once it is attained, help rebuild societies on the ground, and lay the seeds of democracy and the rule of law on what are often very fragile democracies.

That is why we must renew the Canadian forces on two fronts: in our ability to fight when necessary and in our ability to build peace. Let me touch on both of these.

The nature of military operations has changed fundamentally in recent years, as we saw in the gulf war and more recently in Kosovo. Rapid technological change is having a dramatic impact on the kinds of weapons that are used, the equipment, the communications and the principles that guide our operations, our military doctrine as it is known. The instruments we employ are much more sophisticated and the training of our people is much more complex than ever before.

One of our greatest challenges is to improve our ability to get personnel and equipment to trouble spots more quickly and efficiently anywhere on the globe. Fighting alongside our allies now requires the highest level of training and sophistication. The military calls this being interoperable. It simply means that we must mesh our personnel and our equipment. We must work together seamlessly. This in turn is leading to more sharing of resources and more strategic partnerships among our allies, particularly in the NATO alliance.

These changes are having a dramatic effect on how we train, how we plan and what we procure in the way of equipment.

If we are to maintain our combat capability, we have to adapt to these new realities.

• (1535)

Our traditional military role in peacekeeping operations has changed dramatically. Peacekeeping no longer simply involves patrolling ceasefire zones. It means becoming involved in what are really combat zones, combat zones such as Bosnia, Kosovo and East Timor.

When our forces land in these kinds of situations they have to have the equipment and support they need to make a difference on

the ground, unencumbered by concerns over the quality of the equipment they have. They must have the training they need to work not only with other armed forces, that interoperability, but they also have to work with local officials, civil police, the media, non-government organizations and a slew of organizations such as Doctors Without Borders.

Increasingly the men and women of the Canadian forces find themselves at the centre of a large network of players trying to co-ordinate peace enforcement, law and order, emergency relief and aid, and all this while seeking to build peace.

Lastly, our men and women in uniform must have the support they need back home for their families. They should not have to worry about their children or spouses or how they are coping while they are away. Put simply, they must operate in a more complex environment than has been the case in the past.

The nature of our role in peacekeeping and peacemaking is changing. We must prepare ourselves and the men and women of the forces to be able to meet these new challenges. Ironically, all of these changes have occurred during a period when defence spending has been declining, and yet since the end of the cold war the number of Canadian operations has increased dramatically.

In the 40 years, ending in 1989, of the cold war era our forces were involved in 25 missions. Since 1989, the last 10 years, we have been involved in 65 operations. Quite simply, our forces are being asked to do more with less and to do far different types of activities and far more complex activities than ever before. I can assure the House that the Canadian forces will continue to change to meet the new demands of a new time.

As a government we have already taken action to reinvest in their quality of life. The good work of the Standing Committee of National Defence and Veterans Affairs has led to a series of recommendations to help ensure that. The government is committed to that kind of reinvestment in our people, our greatest resource.

In addition to that, more than 300 institutional reforms are being implemented to strengthen leadership, recruitment, accountability and openness, and to change the military justice system. These reforms represent the most sweeping program of change ever undertaken by the Canadian military. Defence is making these changes while meeting its commitments to protect Canada, to contribute to the defence of North America and to support international peace and security. That is a lot to do.

Meeting these commitments day in and day out at home and abroad should never be underestimated. These people should never be underestimated for the good work they do. It is a significant undertaking.

It is important to recognize that we have begun the process of upgrading our equipment in recent years. Every piece of equipment is being replaced, modernized or upgraded. We have a plan. The

*The Address*

government has a plan to do that. We recently purchased new submarines. We have new frigates and new coastal defence vessels. Our new search and rescue helicopters are on order, and we have new light armoured vehicles. The addition of this state of the art equipment and the upgrading of other equipment will serve us well as we move forward.

We are looking ahead to the decisions we need to make to continue to strengthen the Canadian forces for the future. To prepare for the 21st century, defence has developed a long term strategy called "Strategy 2020". Its intent is to position, as our vision statement says, the Canadian forces as a modern, combat capable, task tailored and rapidly deployable force that can respond to emergencies either at home or abroad.

• (1540)

As we saw in Kosovo and after the earthquake in Turkey last August, when human suffering is at issue, time is of the essence. We must be able to get the Canadian forces to where they are needed and get them there fast.

[*Translation*]

The world is evolving and DND must adjust accordingly.

[*English*]

We must find ways to strengthen our ability to rapidly deploy the Canadian forces to where they are needed. We must make the investments in the equipment needed to ensure that the Canadian forces will continue to be interoperable with our allies, and we must continue to reinvest in the men and women who are the lifeblood of the Canadian forces.

Simply put, no credible Canadian contribution to the human security agenda, as it is described in the Speech from the Throne, can be made without forces that are able to meet the challenges of the next century.

The bottom line, and the government has recognized this in the Speech from the Throne, is that we will continue to ensure that the Canadian forces have the capacity to support Canada's role in building a more secure world.

As we enter the next century the Canadian forces will continue to play a vital role as an instrument of our resolve, the resolve of Canadians and of our values. They will continue to work for peace around the world. They will continue to make a vital contribution to the national life of Canada.

This will take resources. This will take commitment. It will take leadership based on a clear vision of the future. That is the commitment that comes from the Speech from the Throne. That is the commitment of the government, and that is the commitment that I will honour as the Minister of National Defence.

**Mr. Gordon Earle (Halifax West, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I was very pleased to hear the minister's comments this afternoon, in particular his comments concerning human security and the role of the Canadian forces in ensuring human security right across the globe.

The minister mentioned, in particular, that acts of mass murder are morally repugnant. They are things that we should all be concerned about and our Canadian forces play a very important role in dealing with them.

One of the worst instances I can think of involving mass murder was the recent slaughter of 800,000 people in Rwanda. This was certainly of moral repugnance to all of us. When we find that kind of situation taking place, certainly we want to do what we can to prevent it from taking place in the future.

I want to ask the minister whether what was recently reported—and he can comment as to whether the report is correct—would support our troops as they attempt to combat these morally repugnant deeds.

It seems that there was a conference being held, which finished yesterday, to deal with the genocide in Rwanda and to look at means of trying to prevent this from happening in the future. It has been reported that Lieutenant General Roméo Dallaire was due to speak at this conference. However, according to the report, he was called out or not allowed to speak, reportedly on instructions from the minister and/or the justice department.

I want to ask the minister how that kind of action, if it did take place, is supporting our troops, because the minister said that our troops must have the support of people back home and their families. I would say that the troops also need the support of the political leaders of our country if they are going to make a meaningful impact in dealing with these issues. We need to have the truth come out in instances such as this. We need to have those instances examined in the fullest so that we can prevent those kinds of disasters in the future.

**Hon. Arthur C. Eggleton:** Mr. Speaker, I agree with the hon. member that Rwanda was a terrible tragedy. I think the international community failed to come to the support of the people of that country at a time when it was necessary.

This country, Canada, did its utmost to help. General Dallaire was the commander who was there. He was putting forth the best effort he could with very little resources and very little support from the United Nations in New York. He cared a great deal about what was happening in Rwanda, so much so that it has affected him and his health very significantly. A fine officer, a man who is dedicated to this country has paid a fair price in terms of his health as a result of this.

*The Address*

• (1545)

It was he who decided not to attend this conference. He did consult the department. He did not consult me personally, but he did consult. He has gone in other cases for example, to the United Nations and to other tribunals of a more legal nature and has testified about Rwanda. This is not an easy thing to do for a man with the memories that he has of Rwanda. However, he has made every effort to be helpful.

I think his initial instinct when he was asked about this conference was to do it because he wants to be helpful. That is the nature of the man. However, on further reflection he decided that it perhaps was not advisable to do. That was a decision he had to make, but please remember that what happened and what he saw in Rwanda has had a very profound effect on him.

This country wants to do everything that is possible, whether it is Rwanda, or Kosovo, or East Timor to try to prevent that kind of human suffering, to try to help people get respect for their human rights, to make sure that their human security is looked after. Canada will continue to play a major role in doing that.

**Mr. Jim Abbott (Kootenay—Columbia, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I think it is a lot of bravado that the defence minister is bringing to this debate. It is quite astounding because it has been consecutive Liberal governments that have cut and cut and cut the national defence budget. Now he tells us that everything is fine. Now he tells us that we have his personal commitment that everything is going to be fine, that there are going to be the resources for our very brave men and women.

It is his Prime Minister who said that Canadians really like getting involved in different peace operations because as Canadians we see ourselves as Boy Scouts. Our armed forces need a whole lot more than the equipment of Boy Scouts. In fact, if we look at the shameful way in which this government and its cutbacks have robbed our proud, sincere, dedicated men and women of the resources to get the job done, it is an absolute shame.

I would suggest with as much respect as I can possibly muster to the defence minister that indeed his promises and the promises of his government are exceptionally shallow. His government should be ashamed of itself for the way in which it continues to underfund and under-resource the brave people in the armed forces.

**Hon. Arthur C. Eggleton:** Mr. Speaker, in talking about empty rhetoric, I think we just got a bit of that.

The member seems to have forgotten that the cuts first of all started back in the years of the Progressive Conservative government. We did take further amounts from all budgets. I understood what the hon. member's party wanted us to do and what we of

course wanted to do and promised to do was to eliminate the deficit. We had to cut costs to do that, so yes, we did that.

We organized the budget in a way that makes it as efficient and as effective as it possibly can be. We have got great value for the taxpayers' dollars out of what we are doing. We are meeting our commitments. There is no doubt that we are squeezed for funds, that we need additional funds.

The Reform Party would not be giving us any additional funds if we followed what it suggested and promised in the last election. I take it the Reform Party stands by its promises from the last election. It said it would put a freeze on any additional expenditure for three years and that all of the money in surpluses would go for debt and tax reduction. On the formula that it promised in the last election campaign, not one penny would come from the Reform Party to help defence.

This year this government increased the defence budget. The Minister of Finance stood in the House in February, and he received a standing ovation, when he indicated that for the first time in a dozen years additional money was being provided for our troops.

• (1550)

Let me also give one other illustration of where we have improved and we have made it more efficient and more effective. We played a major front line role in the Kosovo air campaign. No one likes to talk about bombing and about the need to attack, but when it came to putting our resources and our people on the line, we were able to do that. We could not even do it to that extent in the gulf war because we did not have the equipment that was necessary to play that kind of a front line role. However, we did it in the Kosovo air campaign. I think that quite clearly indicates, as the chief of defence staff has clearly indicated, we are more combat capable. Our troops are more combat capable today than they were in the early nineties.

We have managed to get the deficit eliminated. We have managed to buy new equipment. We have managed to change many parts of the Canadian forces with over 300 changes and reforms. We have managed to make our troops more combat capable so that they can operate in defence of peace and in the building of peace. I think that is greatly to the credit of the government. It is certainly not a position we would be in if the Reform Party were managing the budget.

**Mr. Janko Perić (Cambridge, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, contrary to the rhetoric that has been coming from the Reform Party for the last six years the United Nations has declared Canada as the best country in the world in which to live.

The Speech from the Throne outlined the government's commitment to achieve an even better quality of life for all Canadians. This includes increased resources for early childhood development and targeted assistance for low income families with children.

*The Address*

Can the minister outline and expand a little on what is being done to improve the quality of life of members of Canada's armed forces?

**Hon. Arthur C. Eggleton:** Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for that question. Of paramount importance to us is the quality of life of our men and women who serve this country. They put their lives on the line. They have what is called unlimited liability. They do get injured and they do lose their lives in many circumstances. We have had over 100 peacekeepers in the time that we have been involved in peacekeeping who have lost their lives.

We owe it to them to make sure we do the best we can to improve their quality of life and that we support them and their families. That is an absolute number one priority.

**Mr. Jim Abbott (Kootenay—Columbia, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, it gives me a great deal of pleasure to stand and respond to the Speech from the Throne.

Let us look at what the Speech from the Throne said. "The government will work with Canadians to ensure that our communities continue to be safe". Another point was, "The government will combat drug trafficking". We looked at that and we thought perhaps an amendment might be in order. The amendment we proposed was "That this government has failed to seriously deal with the problem of drug trafficking, youth crime and child pornography", which in our judgment is a statement of fact.

While the throne speech was generally imprecise, with fluffy generalities signifying little or nothing, in the case of criminal justice, the government outlined inaccuracies and total distortions of truth.

Let us examine the Liberals' rhetoric against their record. They say, "The government will strengthen the capacity of the RCMP and other agencies to address the threats to public security in Canada and work with enforcement agencies in other countries". So say the Liberals. That is their rhetoric. Here is their record.

The lead story in the Vancouver *Sun* two weeks ago puts a lie to their statement. It said, "RCMP halt fraud investigations blaming lack of money and staff. A Kamloops couple complained that they had been duped out of \$450,000 U.S. in a stock scheme. Call your MP, the Mounties say". They did not have to call me and certainly they did not have to call any of the Reform MPs because that is precisely what we have been shouting at the Liberals about for years.

This is a further quote from an RCMP officer in that article, "It is not a message we want to send, but we don't want to give the public a false belief that we will pursue their complaint if we don't

have the resources". That, as I say, was from the head of the RCMP commercial crime section in Vancouver.

It is not just B.C. I have been following a case in Edmonton where investors have been ripped off for \$3 million in a stock swindle. They have been waiting three years for the RCMP to complete their investigation and for charges to be brought against the perpetrators of the swindle. The police have evidence coming out of their ears but they simply do not have the resources to get on with their job.

• (1555)

Mr. Speaker, I failed to mention that I will be sharing my time with the member for Calgary Northeast. My apologies.

Jason Cowan and Barb Trosin had an inventive product they wanted to bring to market but as with most entrepreneurs, they required capital. Unfortunately for them as with the case in Kamloops, they fell into the clutches of unscrupulous stock swindlers. Their case also has a Vancouver component where some of their stock was deceptively and fraudulently passed to another unsuspecting investor in a switch which took its inspiration from the Paul Newman movie *The Sting*. The offices used for the switch involved a well-known Canadian investment firm without the firm having any knowledge of the scam that occurred right at the front desk in its office. Like in the Kamloops story, the RCMP do not have the resources to pursue this obvious criminal fraud.

What about Bre-X, the \$6 billion ripped out of investors' pockets and the RCMP already shutting down the investigation? I have a couple of questions.

Why did the RCMP give approval for unsupervised destruction of documents in the Bre-X office in the days immediately following the confirmation of the fraud? The answer seems to be lack of resources.

Why has there been no investigation into the responsibility that Nesbitt Burns had in dispatching their geologist on multiple trips to the mine site in Indonesia? He consistently reported no problems while the firm raked off millions of dollars in brokerage fees, yet within five minutes of an Australian geologist arriving at the mine, he detected serious problems.

The obvious answer is gross under-resourcing of Canada's national police force. Yet the Liberals have the gall to make statements in the throne speech as if they really cared about protecting Canadians. The bottom line is Canadian and international investors can be fleeced by swindlers and due to the government's intentional under-resourcing of the RCMP, our national police force can do nothing about it. The drastic result is that investment capital in Canada is becoming scarce.

I intend to ask the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights to have the commissioner of the RCMP appear and explain his force's actions on the Bre-X file.



*The Address*

Speaking of international concerns and commitments, let me talk about organized crime. This is what the Liberals say. "The government will also continue to work closely with the U.S. to modernize our shared border for the 21st century". That is what the Liberals say; that is their rhetoric. Here are the results. It is as if they have not had the responsibility of running Canada for the last six years. Wake up and smell the coffee. The government has no vision to lead Canada safely into the 21st century.

In 1998 the United Nations declared transnational crime as its highest priority. Members of the G-8 affirmed that it is one of the major challenges facing the world on the threshold of the 21st century. Organized crime has emerged as the number one threat to Canada's overall security, yet the government has cut the legs out from under Canada's security committee. How? This is how.

Last weekend it was revealed that a top secret planning document was stolen. It was a planning document for next year and to all accounts should never have been removed from CSIS property. Unbelievably, it was in a briefcase in the back of a car in a parking lot in Toronto. The bright light from CSIS was at the Toronto Maple Leafs game. She left the briefcase in the back of her car. Druggies smashed the window, took the case and we were told it was thrown into a dumpster, but we are not sure. If we think a smash and grab drug addict is a reliable source for information, then perhaps we will have no trouble also believing in the tooth fairy.

We also know there has been a serious breach of security in Canada's Hong Kong trade office. What happened? There was a cover-up. When the RCMP officer revealed documents that clearly showed a cover-up, he was suspended. Meanwhile, we have also learned that a special operation to get intelligence about Asian gangs called operation Sidewinder was suspended in 1996.

• (1600)

It was not only suspended but all of the data was removed from electronic storage, including e-mails, and all hard copy was shredded. Why? As a matter of fact, the members of the Security Intelligence Review Committee, who are civilians and who oversee Canada's spy agency, learned about the shredding and the turning down of the Sidewinder operation as a result of picking up the newspaper a couple of Fridays ago. They were never told by the solicitor general and never informed by the agents at CSIS.

With that report, we would have information on the people smuggling gangs that hit Canada's west coast this summer. At least we would have a starting point to understand the infiltration into Canadian businesses by organized crime. But, I repeat, the report was shredded. My question is: Why?

Does it have anything to do with the other big story this weekend? That story revolves around the fact that the RCMP and

CSIS are having a turf war. They do not share vital information. They investigate each other. There is constant bad blood that inhibits their ability to protect Canadians.

The government delayed and delayed the appointment of civilian oversight for CSIS. For years the spy service of Canada has run without the checks and balances set out in legislation. It has led to an unhealthy culture in CSIS. CSIS exhibited that culture through the director of CSIS when he came before the parliamentary standing committee on justice last May 25.

I fault the Liberal government, the government elected in 1993. The SIRC positions were vacant for years, that is years. There was no proper oversight of Canada's spy agency as a result of a deliberate omission by the Liberal government. All law enforcement and national security agents must, at the very least, be able to maintain the ability to target threats to national security, and the Liberals are badly failing the test.

There has been no strengthening of RCMP resources. Each year the RCMP face more and more challenges as the potential for technological crime increases. Its equipment and resources are rusted while organized crime goes on a buying spree of new technology.

We have just had a very tiny glimpse at the difference between the Liberals' rhetoric and the Liberals' reality. Canadians deserve better from the government. They want the government to resource our people who are charged with the responsibility of maintaining our national police force and our national security. Canadians deserve better than this government.

**Mr. Art Hanger (Calgary Northeast, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be able to speak today on a defence matter as it relates to the Speech from the Throne.

It has been a long and very busy year for national defence as DND has had to defend itself against one scandal after another. There have been various gaffs and a steady decline in resources and equipment. I by no means want to pick on the military itself because ultimately it all comes back to a political answer, which is with the defence minister himself and the Liberal government.

Unfortunately, the Speech from the Throne referred directly to the Canadian forces only once and in very vague terms. Even worse, and with rare exception, the Minister of National Defence has been unavailable, unaware and unseen through this summer's military meltdown.

Instead, we have had to view the repeated and unwarranted sight of military officers facing interrogation by the national media demanding answers to the glaring problems in Canada's military. These problems are political in nature and should be addressed by their creator, namely the defence minister and ultimately the Prime Minister who appointed him.

*The Address*

• (1605)

I will offer just a brief recapitulation of those problems that have plagued his department over the last four months because it is important to analyze these issues separately as each indicates severe systemic rot within the department.

The summer began with the discovery, via an access to information request, that unknown numbers of Canadian peacekeepers had probably been exposed to toxic soil in Croatia. Hundreds were experiencing severe health problems, ranging from the loss of eyesight to stomach afflictions. Though the issue of exposure was unsettling enough, what was even more disturbing were the measures taken to cover up the exposure back in Canada. We learned that a medical document attesting to the exposure had first been altered and then shredded. We learned that despite the blustering from the minister that the matter would be thoroughly investigated, a ministerial briefing note had mentioned the issue in 1995. The board of enquiry established to investigate the scandal was itself marked by conflict of interest and the first chairman and one legal advisor quickly resigned amid criticism.

The toxic soil controversy has highlighted two disturbing elements of military culture in Canada supported by the government, namely, dirty tricks and appalling health care for military personnel.

The hierarchy within DND, no doubt driven by the minister's office and his powerful civilian mandarins who have effectively controlled the day by day decision making of the Canadian forces for 25 years, is more interested in denying scandal than exposing it and cleaning it up. It would much rather bury the truth than expose it. It seems unwilling or unable to admit that mistakes have been made, but will go to extraordinary lengths to change the facts. Individuals who attempt to fight for full disclosure are often harassed, intimidated and ultimately driven from the military ranks. This perverse and destructive atmosphere of character assassination must be purged from our military culture.

Whatever happened to military leadership? In a Canadian military culture now long forgotten, generals and admirals possessed a military bearing that outshone the brass on their uniforms. They did not seek to anticipate the political direction of the day. They did seek to maintain discipline and honour in the profession of arms. There has to be a clear distinction between the bureaucrats and the military decision makers.

The Croatian scandal also gave Canadians some insight into the deplorable quality of health care in the military. Where else could confidential medical files simply disappear from a person's medical history, yet document tampering has occurred at other times and dozens of former and serving military personnel have written to my office describing examples of it in their careers?

Rank and file military personnel cannot see a doctor when they so desire, unlike all other Canadians. They are often administered

drugs contrary to their desires. Their illnesses are often misdiagnosed and mistreated.

I think of the radar technician aboard the HMCS *Vancouver*, Petty Officer Kevin Simon, who suffered from lung cancer for six months and was told that he had a lingering cough and cold.

Then there was retired Sergeant Mike Kipling whom DND persecuted and in a supreme example of vindictiveness initiated court martial proceedings against him because he refused a mouldy anthrax vaccine.

This, too, is a scandal. It is scandalous that our serving sons and daughters must first accept third rate health care and then be subjected to wilful desecration of their medical histories.

I would also ask the minister to allow military members to have full access to civilian health care facilities where available, that their medical files are viewed and approved by military members on an annual basis and that the role of military doctors be focused on deployments rather than on domestic medicine. The current system is quite clearly not working. It is leaving the Canadian forces open to abuse.

• (1610)

We have also witnessed over the past three months what I call a military meltdown within the Canadian forces. Quite simply, our military is imploding, rotting from the inside due to a lack of funding and genuine government neglect.

The air force talks about phasing out the Snowbird aerobatic team in a weird attempt to shock Canadians into economic reality. Here is some food for thought. If the military needs \$30 million required to run the Snowbirds every year, why not examine the bona fide white elephant, the Pearson Peacekeeping Centre? This school of academic pretension was established as a rest home for recycled DND and Liberal cronies, proving that the public trough is always replenished for some.

Why are we sending military officers who have already been deployed on peacekeeping missions, to a school that requires four to six weeks to teach the obvious, how to keep the peace? Maybe then we can leave the Snowbirds in peace.

Though the Snowbird threat may either be a hard bargaining position or fancy, the air force is preparing to sell off its Tutors and T-33s, both of which have just received upgrades. Squadrons are being disbanded.

More dangerously, we are told that the maintenance to the new Cormorant helicopters will be contracted out, or in the catch phrase of the new DND, provided for by alternative service delivery, ASD.

Though we support the notion of contracting out where cost savings can definitely be realized and the impact on combat capability is unaffected, hard operational support services must be

deployed on military missions and should remain as military trades.

Naturally, the increasing broad application of alternate service delivery has been unsettling to hundreds of maintenance technicians who have proven that they can provide maintenance at a cheaper cost than any civilian contractor. They know the nature of the work. They can be deployed with a squadron in an hour's notice and they certainly do have the capability of fulfilling that trade requirement because of their dedication. Now they are being betrayed and told that their expertise is unwanted.

We can either ignore reality or accept the need to find solutions. I would hope that the minister could see beyond his lack of interest in defence and his need to play politics with the Canadians forces to acknowledge this fact. I would pose the following questions to him and demand answers on behalf of hundreds of military personnel who write to my office insisting that the government is not doing enough.

Will the minister commit himself to a full disclosure of the Sharp board of inquiry into the toxic soil? Will the minister examine the military health care system so that they too can receive the treatment that they so richly deserve by serving the country?

**Mr. Myron Thompson (Wild Rose, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I have a quick question for my colleague for Calgary Northeast who arrived in this place at the same time I did back in 1993.

Not fully understanding how serious it is in terms of the democratic processes that take place in this particular place, I am wondering if the member could tell me if I am wrong or if I am right, and what we can do about it.

We have had many debates in the House with regard to our military placements. For example, I remember the debate on whether we should we send troops to Bosnia. At different times, we have had different debates on what we were going to do in regard to the use of our military.

I am thoroughly convinced that decisions are made before they are ever brought to the House and that the debate is absolutely a futile waste of time just simply because the decisions have already been made by the government. We are simply going through the motions. We do not have a democratic discussion about the placement of our troops throughout the world. It is simply run by the front line people on that side of the House. Then there are the little puppets who jump up and vote according to what they are told. They are called the rest of the Liberals. Is my analysis all wet, or how close to being accurate am I?

• (1615)

**Mr. Art Hanger:** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member for Wild Rose for his question. It is a very positive question. It reflects

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the reality of what happens in the House with the government and how it expands beyond into the departments that are represented by ministers in the House.

Yes, we have a problem when it comes to top down government, and everyone in the House should be involved in addressing that particular issue.

I have seen bills come from the government that go to a committee, where they are subject to scrutiny with substantial debate. However, there really is no opportunity to change what exists in the top down process. The decision has been made.

The idea is born somewhere, maybe in the bureaucracy, or in the minds of the various departments, or in some minister's office. Then it goes through a process within the bureaucracy or within the minister's office. It is very much confined to that realm. There is no consultation in the broader context. Then it is tossed out for the opposition to look at, to discuss and debate without any opportunity for real honest debate to change what proposals may have been made. In fact, before it even hits the committee room or the opposition has a chance to scrutinize it, it is already decided.

Is that a democratic process? No, it is far from democratic. If we were looking for honest and true debate in the House to formulate law and policy, it would be from the bottom up, with broad consultation. Then it would be formulated in a final sense in the various departments. That does not happen. Unfortunately we have more of a dictatorship in that regard than a democratic process.

**Mr. Jim Abbott (Kootenay—Columbia, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I pointed out earlier today to the defence minister that it has been successive cutbacks, first by the Trudeau government, then by the Conservatives and now by the Liberals, which have created the tremendously desperate situation with respect to resources for the armed forces. He implied that the Reform Party would have cut further and would have done even more damage.

I wonder if my colleague, who is the defence critic, would care to comment on the minister's statement.

**Mr. Art Hanger:** Mr. Speaker, that is a good question and one worthy of a good clear answer as far as the position of the Reform Party, the official opposition.

We have made it very clear that the defence budget has been cut to the bone. In fact, it has almost destroyed the military completely because of a lack of good proper funding and moneys directed to the proper areas.

The Reform Party has clearly advocated that there should be a \$2 billion infusion into the military budget so that it can meet the very basic of needs of looking after our troops, buying the necessary equipment, and looking after the operational end so that proper training can be conducted. One of the most urgent issues right now

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is supplying our forces with good combat clothes. That program is long, long overdue.

**Mrs. Karen Kraft Sloan (York North, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to inform the House that I will be splitting my time with the member for Mississauga South.

As the Prime Minister said in his response to the throne speech:

We Canadians have proven to be a very determined people. We have established a distinct Canadian model. Accommodation of cultures... a partnership between citizens and state. A balance that promotes individual freedom and economic prosperity while, at the same time, sharing risks and benefits. An understanding that government can be an instrument of collective action—a means of serving the broader public interest.

• (1620)

As an instrument of collective action government has a crucial role in the lives of the people of our nation. As members of this place we have a heavy responsibility to ensure that we make decisions and laws that serve the public interest. As Liberals we take a balanced, sensible approach, one that understands that not only must risk be shared, but benefits as well.

There are some in this House who do not believe that government can be a positive force in society. They cling to a dogma of less government, not good government, a dogma which ignores the public interest in favour of narrow self-interest.

We can never forget our role. We must continue to work diligently to advance the health and well-being of Canadians, particularly our children and youth, to preserve and restore the health of our natural heritage, to build stronger communities, to foster a sustainable and viable economy, to continue as prudent fiscal managers of the nation's financial assets and to advance our outward looking vision as a country by continuing our contributions to world security.

A society that respects and honours its children has its fundamentals right. These fundamentals are a society with strong environmental laws and regulations that are enforced; a society with strong progressive social and economic values that allow for such things as income support measures to ensure that all of its citizens have access to nutritious food, safe shelter and human dignity; a society that respects human rights and opportunities for education for all Canadians. This is the kind of society that Canadians want.

As an active member of the Liberal children's caucus since its inception in 1995, I am very pleased to see such a child centred throne speech. Extending parental benefits from six months to one year is crucial in providing support for young families. No more will new families have to make a choice between a job and the personal care of their young baby. I am also pleased to see the federal government take leadership in making federal and federally regulated workplaces family friendly.

I am also hopeful that the government's plan to negotiate early childhood development programs with the provinces will be fruitful. I think that as a first step in these negotiations this must be reflected in a commitment for funding in the federal budget to be delivered next February.

A focus on the zero to six years is crucial for the healthy development of our children. A fund to provide for early childhood development programs is an initiative proposed by the national Liberal children's caucus.

Our commitment to children clearly includes initiatives to protect and restore the natural environment. The throne speech points out that a clean and healthy environment is important to our long term economic and social well-being. It is central to our quality of life. Our ability to adopt innovative environmental practices and technologies will increasingly be part of Canada's strength in the 21st century. I could not agree more.

Colin Isaac in the *Gallon Environment Letter* found that the 1999 throne speech contained more mention of the environment than almost any previous throne speech. Sixteen per cent of the speech referenced the environment and it also identified 21 environment related commitments, such as cleaning up contaminated sites on federal lands, strengthening the government's science capacity for environmental research, extending Canada's national parks system, addressing the structural weaknesses that have been identified in the management of toxic substances, and protecting species at risk and the critical habitat. These commitments make up some of the more significant ones. The government has also restated its commitment under the Kyoto protocol to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

The throne speech also goes on to emphasize the need for tough pollution standards to better protect the health of children, seniors and residents of the north. These initiatives are necessary to address the nation's fundamental environmental problems. Our desire to act on these commitments and our ability to successfully implement them will be the yardstick against which future generations will measure us.

• (1625)

My riding of York North is historically important in the development of democratic government in Canada. It is the riding of Baldwin and Lafontaine, fathers of responsible government for Upper and Lower Canada and the unification of the two Canadas. The rebellion of 1837 began in York North, in Holland Landing, not far from my home village of Mount Albert. Small business owners and farmers marched down Yonge Street, rejecting the tyranny and elitist exclusive policies of the Tory government in Toronto.

York North is a vibrant, diverse riding with many small business owners. The agri-food sector is still very important to the economic health of the area. We have a first nations community, the

Chippewas of Georgina Island, which is working very successfully on achieving self-government.

The people of York North have told me that they want a balanced, sensible approach to government. They also understand that both risks and benefits of nation building must be shared. They want tax cuts and they want us to pay down the country's debt. More than anything, they want to ensure that their children and grandchildren are safe, secure and healthy, that opportunities for our nation's children are many and that our children achieve their full potential.

The people of York North want to strengthen health care for Canadians and ensure that the health of our natural environment is restored. They want us to foster a dynamic economy and to help build stronger communities. They want Canada to advance world security. They want the government to continue its prudent fiscal management.

Most of all, the people of York North believe, as I do, that Canada is the place to be in the 21st century.

**Mr. Gordon Earle (Halifax West, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I was very pleased to hear the hon. member's comments with respect to a healthy and clean environment. We know this is very important for the future of our society and, as has been mentioned, for our children and our children's children.

I wonder if the hon. member could give me her views with respect to her government's decision to move ahead with the transportation and burning of nuclear waste in Canada when there has been clear indication that many citizens in Canada are opposed to it. The U.S. has indicated it is no longer interested. Yet, the government seems to want to persist with this potentially dangerous environmental action in our country.

Could the member please give her comments on that matter?

**Mrs. Karen Kraft Sloan:** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to respond to this question. I am going to give a response which might surprise the hon. member, but my answer is indicative of a healthy democracy and the ability of members in the House to speak their minds and speak on behalf of their constituents and the people of Canada.

I do not agree with that decision.

**Mr. Myron Thompson (Wild Rose, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I always smile a bit when I hear some of the comments that come out of the mouths of Liberals. First, there is the strong statement of how the Liberals respect and honour their children. I ask the member how this respect is being shown by a court decision in British Columbia, which will reach the supreme court, and Lord only knows when it will reach a decision, that allows child pornography to exist to the extent that it does.

### *The Address*

Why would the hon. member dare to say that we respect and honour our children and not have a government that will stand up for these kids, bring in the notwithstanding clause and put an end to this nonsense? Why is this going on?

**Mrs. Karen Kraft Sloan:** Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member had listened to my speech he would know that I said a society which respects and honours children.

I believe that this government has taken firm action on behalf of children in Canada. The options that the hon. member has suggested are not workable options and the process that is in place to deal with such a deplorable act as child pornography is the appropriate way to go.

**Mr. Myron Thompson:** Mr. Speaker, that is a totally unacceptable answer, but we will try again on another question.

• (1630 )

In the throne speech, there was an obvious absence of any words to address the dire needs of our reserves throughout the country. The United Nations has declared them to be worse than some third world countries. The conditions are deplorable.

The cry of the aboriginal people, the ordinary grassroots people, is loud and clear across the land. Thousands of them are crying out for help from the government in terms of bringing some accountability to the reserves to address the serious issues that exist in their lives.

Why did the throne speech fail to address the accountability on the reserves? It totally ignored it. Do not tell me there was something in there about it, because I looked at it over and over again and it was not there. Why?

**Mrs. Karen Kraft Sloan:** Mr. Speaker, I purposely mentioned the first nations community, the Chippewas of Georgina Island and their successful work toward achieving self-government because they were one of the 13 communities across the country who were the sponsors, creators and promoters of Bill C-49, which the Reform Party opposed and delayed for a number of years.

As I rose in the House on numerous occasions to debate the bill, I felt a great deal of shame at the comments that came from the other side. Members of my constituency, people that I represent here in the House of Commons, including the chief, his band council and other people from his community that I worked very hard with on this particular issue had to sit and listen to the comments from the members opposite. It was with a great deal of shame that I had to listen to these things and know that those people heard those comments.

The second point I would like to make is with respect to children. Why is it that members of the Reform Party want us to

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repeal our ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child which clearly protects the fundamental human rights of children, including protection from child pornography. Answer that question.

**Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the throne speech provided Canadians with a framework for government initiatives for the second session of the 36th Parliament. Rarely does a throne speech articulate specifics of any initiative, but rather the objectives and directions that the government plans to pursue.

In this throne speech there was a specific commitment to extend parental leave to a full year for new or adopted children, and to implement it no later than January 1, 2001. This is no small item in itself. It is, however, a small item with regard to the children's agenda. It is an important signal with regard to the evolution of our child and family policy. I would like to spend my time elaborating on why this specific initiative is so important to all Canadians.

The 1996 Statistics Canada national longitudinal survey on children and youth found that 25% of Canadian children enter adult life with significant emotional, behavioural, academic or social problems. In the words of Dr. Paul Steinhauer of Voices for Children, "With one in four children entering adult life significantly handicapped, we can look forward to a society that will be less able to generate the economic base required to supply the economic supports and services needed by one in four adults unable to carry their own weight". In that context, investing in children particularly in the early years is an imperative, not an option.

According to Dr. Fraser Mustard, childhood outcomes are not a question of being rich or poor, but rather of other factors related to the quality of care during the formative years. This view was supported by Statistics Canada research presented in November 1998 which found that the quality of care during the early years can overcome the damaging impacts related to family poverty.

In 1994 the Carnegie task force on meeting the needs of young children published a report entitled "Starting Points". Its research observed that good physical and mental health, the ability to learn, to cope with stress, to relate well with others, and to have a positive outlook, were all rooted in the earliest experiences of life. The task force concluded that where, how and with whom children spend their early years of life are the most significant determinants of lifelong physical, mental and social health.

• (1635)

In 1997 there was a conference at the White House on early childhood development. One of the principal findings announced was that the neurological foundations for rational thinking,

problem solving and general reasoning appear to be established by age one.

In June 1998 Dr. Mustard appeared before the Standing Committee on Human Resources Development and described the health impact of the rapid development during the first year as being dynamite. At birth the human brain is far from fully formed. In the days and weeks that follow, vital neural connections are formed that create pathways along which learning will take place.

It is estimated that 80% of the lifetime development of the human brain occurs during the first three years of life. These connections do not however form automatically. The quality of nutrition, caregiving and stimulation determines not only the number of these healthy connections but how well they are wired for both cognitive and emotional intelligence.

In April 1998 the Canadian Institute of Child Health announced its concurrence. It reported that at birth the parts of the human brain that handle thinking and remembering as well as emotional and social behaviour are remarkably undeveloped. The fact that the brain matures in the world and not in the womb means that children are deeply affected by their early experiences, that relationships with caregivers, the sights, the sounds, the smells and the feelings they experience actually determine brain structure and thus shape the way we learn, think and behave for the rest of our lives.

The report also deals extensively with the importance of responsive care which addresses the child's needs when the child signals us rather than when the caregiver can provide for those needs.

In November 1997 the report of the National Forum on Health also concluded that there was an urgent need to invest in children. It reported that deprivation during early childhood can impair brain development and permanently hinder the development of cognition and speech. It further stated that the impact on children's physical and mental health is very significant and can only be partially offset by interventions later in life. It concluded that the failure to invest in the early years of life increases the remedial cost to our health, education, social services and criminal justice systems.

No family should have to choose between the job it needs and the child it loves. Attempting to balance the responsibilities of work and family is difficult and may compromise the quality of child care. For many parents their children come first and they seek more flexibility, options and choices to allow them to put the interests of their children ahead of their own.

Social policy should presume that parents and not governments should be making decisions affecting the caregiving of their children. They are in the best position to choose what constitutes the best possible care arrangement for their children. We should

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therefore seek to provide as much flexibility and as many options and choices to parents in the best interests of children.

I will turn now to the importance of breast feeding. In April 1998 Dr. Christopher Ruhm of the University of North Carolina published a research paper entitled "Parental Leave and Child Health". This researcher studied 25 years of population data in nine European countries. He found up to a 29% reduction in infant mortality where parental leave of at least 50 weeks was taken. That is very significant.

The research also highlighted the significant benefits of breast feeding and found a lower incidence of sudden infant death syndrome, accidental deaths, and sicknesses causing death. Exposure to a broader range of environmental risks, travel risks, risks associated with public places and risks associated with exposure to other persons, in particular children, were all contributing factors to the overall findings.

The health benefits of breast feeding cannot be overstated. In 1998 the Canadian Paediatric Society announced its unanimous endorsement of the World Health Organization's new recommended guideline that mothers should breast feed for at least one year for optimal health outcomes of their children.

The research on breast feeding clearly confirms the importance for optimal infant health. It also enhances the bond between mother and child which is a significant factor affecting healthy outcomes. In addition, a family can save up to \$4,000 in the first year in the cost of baby formula alone, which significantly affects the economics of the decision to provide direct parental care.

• (1640)

Based on the comprehensive research, there is a need to promote, protect and support breast feeding in Canada. Extended parental leave options could help to achieve these objectives. According to Dr. Fraser Mustard, breast feeding can provide a perfect nutritional and emotional nurturing to endow an infant with the important capacity needed for a full and productive life.

What would be the criteria for policy development? Obviously, our policy should be child centred and promote the best interests of children to the best extent possible. It should presume that parents are the primary caregivers. It should provide flexibility, options and choices. It should be inclusive and responsive to the social realities. That is why we need more choices. Finally, the policy should be fair and equitable and neither penalize nor compel caregiving choices.

The first year of life is the most important period during which a caregiver can influence the future physical, mental and social health outcomes of children. It is vital that this opportunity for either parent to provide direct parental care to a new child or an adopted child during that first year should be made available.

Therefore, extending parental leave from the current 10 weeks to 37 weeks to allow one full year for one of the parents to provide direct parental care is an important option.

Investing in children, particularly during the formative years, represents a sound preventative strategy to improve the physical, mental and social health of children. Even the most conservative research estimates show that for every \$1 invested in children, there are \$2 saved in health, social program, educational and criminal justice costs. The studies have even estimated cost savings to be as much as \$7 for every \$1 invested.

Let me conclude by repeating the most important fact. In Canada 25% of our children enter adult life with significant emotional, behavioural, academic or social problems. The monetary and social costs are enormous and therefore investing in children is an imperative, not an option. Research has consistently found that the most significant determinant of child health outcomes is the quality of care provided during the first years of life. Therefore, if we value our children, we must also value our caregivers. In my view, extending parental care is in a small way showing that we do value our children and their caregivers.

[*Translation*]

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland):** It is my duty, pursuant to Standing Order 38, to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the hon. member for Acadie—Bathurst, Employment Insurance; the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre, Tobacco.

[*English*]

**Mr. Gordon Earle (Halifax West, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to commend the hon. member on making some very good points with respect to children and the importance of caring and nurturing children and investing in children. He touched upon some very important issues, breast feeding, proper nurturing of the child, the bonding between parent and child, and so forth.

I seek his comments on another topic which is very closely related and that is homelessness. Today we saw on the Hill what in my view was a very sad commentary upon the state of our society. Numerous homeless people and people supporting them came to the Hill to make their concerns known to the nation's capital and to those who are leading this country. There were riot police lined up in riot gear, dogs, and police with batons. There was even the use of pepper spray against these unfortunate people.

This is a very serious problem. What does the hon. member see in the throne speech that addresses that issue? We know a minister was appointed to deal with the homelessness issue. She has been travelling across the country and gathering information, but it is time now to stop travelling and stop studying. The answers are there.

*The Address*

It is very clear that the federal government needs to reinvest in the social housing program, reinvest in support services for those who are released from institutions and so forth, yet the throne speech did not address those issues. Does the hon. member have any comments on that problem?

• (1645)

**Mr. Paul Szabo:** Mr. Speaker, the issue of homelessness is a very serious and important priority for the government. The member will well understand that homelessness is a complex problem that needs more than a simple solution. There is no simple solution.

The Golden report on homelessness found that 35% of homeless people in Toronto had mental illness, 28% were youth who were alienated from their families of which 70% had experienced physical or sexual abuse, 18% were aboriginals off reserve and 10% were abused women.

The member will well understand that this does not paint a picture of economic poverty and homelessness due to economic causes. It is social poverty.

The member is quite right that there have to be solutions. But I can tell the member that finding a solution to mental illness, to family breakdown, to youth who are alienated from their families, to domestic violence and to aboriginal issues will take time.

I think the member would concede that the government has covered the bases in terms of putting the framework in place so that all members in this place can work together to deal with homelessness.

**Mr. Myron Thompson (Wild Rose, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I am going to try once again because I have known this gentleman for a few years and I totally respect his values, his understanding of family and of young children. I know he has his heart in the right place. We have also served on committees together to try and resolve some of the problems that young children face.

With regard to the child pornography issue and hundreds of thousands of signatures and letters from the Canadian public and many more on its way, can the member explain to me why the government is reluctant to do something about the issue today by invoking the notwithstanding clause as some of the member's backbenchers have suggested prior to this date? Let us stop the perversion.

**Mr. Paul Szabo:** Mr. Speaker, I understand the member's question. The Sharpe case has certainly challenged Canadians to deal with the very serious issue of possession of child pornography.

It was simple possession alone. The member knows that the effect of that case was to basically deal with the laws as they stand

in B.C. Throughout the rest of the country, the member knows that the laws of Canada remain in place and continue to be in force.

The member has asked a specific question and I will give him an answer. I am advised by justice officials that if the notwithstanding clause was invoked it could not be applied retroactively, in which case Sharpe would get off. I do not want Sharpe to get off. I want the laws of Canada to be defended in the courts to the fullest extent. I do not want anybody in Canada to get away with possession of child pornography.

The notwithstanding clause is only a perspective instrument. We have to go back and make sure that all of the cases and all of the charges that have been laid since the Sharpe case, get dealt with by the laws of Canada that protect our children from those who would seek to abuse them.

[Translation]

**Mr. Pierre de Savoye (Portneuf, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to take part in today's debate on the throne speech and to respond to a number of statements made in that speech.

Let me point out first off that the session started four weeks late. According to the government, that time was used to prepare the Speech from the Throne.

I should let you know at this point that, like my colleagues, I will be sharing my time. I will be sharing it with the hon. member for Lévis-et-Chutes-de-la-Chaudière. We will both speak for ten minutes.

As I was saying, it is unfortunate that the government delayed the beginning of the session by four weeks in order to draft this Speech from the Throne which, as we all know, could have been prepared over the summer.

The speech is timid and lukewarm in terms of substance. While it is rather lengthy, the speech does not have much substance. It lacks substance.

• (1650)

Of course, there are a few interesting things in there, but there are also serious omissions. Take telecommunications for example.

With respect to telecommunications, the throne speech says that the government will adapt its programs to reflect the socioeconomic realities of rural communities and that it will intensify its efforts to ensure that those communities and all regions of Canada can take advantage of the opportunities created by the new global, knowledge based economy.

We understand what that means. It means that the government wants to connect all rural communities. I am all for it, because it is important. Between you and me, many people still use the phone to talk. Computers are not the only ones to use phone lines. In our



rural communities, there are still ordinary people made of flesh and bones who like to pick up to phone to have a conversation.

What is the government doing for these people? Let me tell you what it is doing, or rather what it is not doing for them. In urban areas, the government allows for competition to decrease the cost of local residential phone services. In rural areas, the phone bill has been going up year after year. In some cases, it increased twofold over six years. This represents an impressive inflation rate.

Why is that? The problem is simple. Businesses operating in rural areas have higher telephone bills than those operating in urban areas. The message to these businesses is very clear: if you want to save on communication costs, get out of the rural areas and into the city. I am sorry to say that is an unacceptable message. Rural communities have a right to life as well.

When a company or individual in a rural area wants to have telephone service, the first thing needed is quality service. There are some areas in Quebec, Ontario and elsewhere that are still in the party-line era, with two households to a line and with exchanges that cannot handle electronic signals. In short, they are still in the dark ages, telephonically speaking.

Then there are the long distance costs. There are big savings to be made by major companies with high calling volumes. But an individual—a man or woman who is not just a single user but a rural user on top of that—may find, believe it or not, that he or she is in a municipality where calling city hall is a long distance call. Imagine that.

The throne speech has nothing to say on any of this, but I would go even further. Very recently, just a few weeks ago, the CRTC brought down a decision on high service-cost areas, which to all intents and purposes means the rural areas. The assumption was that telephone companies charge reasonable amounts to their subscribers and therefore there was nothing to worry about.

The telephone companies have raised their monthly rates for local calling beyond a reasonable level. Some families have discontinued phone service. Others, however, cannot and will not, but will give up some other essential instead or will deprive their children of some other essential. It seems that the Speech from the Throne has no consideration for these circumstances, which are worsening poverty.

• (1655)

The government and the Minister of Industry, in particular, through the CRTC, have totally abandoned the rural community. In Quebec the situation is even more tragic. Most of rural Quebec is served by Québec Téléphone, known as Quebec Tel. This company is 51% American owned.

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For this reason, the CRTC has denied Quebec Tel the right to expand within Quebec or Canada, but is permitting Canadian firms and even new companies from the United States—AT&T and Sprint—to eat away at the territory of Quebec Tel.

Consequently, Quebec Tel is being eaten away from the inside by this competition, which, to all intents and purposes, is unfair. The Minister of Industry could, with a simple decision, accord Quebec Tel the rights the other telephone companies, including the American companies, enjoy on Canadian soil. This puts both the company and its subscribers, including myself, at a disadvantage. The situation is intolerable and unacceptable and is not even mentioned in the throne speech.

This speech does not deal with the real challenges in telecommunications, challenges that concern the rural community. The country is big. Quebec is big, it is vast. There is air and great open spaces, but the government is literally mocking the people who live in these spaces and who need telephone service.

Wherever I am in Quebec, my hydro bill is always the same: distance is not a factor. The cost of my car registration is the same for a given class of vehicle. My drivers' license costs the same, whether I live in Montreal, Quebec City or Portneuf. So why, tell me why, does the cost of my telephone vary according to where I live?

We had the choice for the telephone of the hydro approach or the airline route approach. The choice was the airline route approach, and the cost has become prohibitive for those who live far away.

**Mr. Michel Bellehumeur (Berthier—Montcalm, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I wanted to follow my colleague; in fact, what I have is more of a remark than a question.

He is entirely right. In the throne speech, we have the government talking about the Internet and about connecting many municipalities in Quebec with the world. This is all very lovely, but since I too am a member with a rural riding, I can confirm that, in 1999, on the eve of the next millennium, there are taxpayers in Quebec—and in Canada as well, I am sure—who have party lines, and even some who do not have any telephone service at all.

The federal government wants to invest in impressive programs such as the Internet, but does nothing about what is happening just outside major cities. Bell Canada and other telephone companies have come up with this wonderful concept of areas without service. I urge all members of the House to examine the legislation and to look at all the definitions. They will realize that, ultimately, the telephone companies are the big winners. All they have to do is sit tight. That is it.

I think the government should take some very tough action. When the CRTC looked into this, the government was strangely quiet, while the regions all got together to bring to light the fact

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that, in 1999, there are, as I said, families without any telephone service at all.

• (1700)

Worse yet, Bell Canada has allocated telephone numbers to families—they are listed in the directory—that do not even have service because their homes are perhaps 10 or 15 metres beyond the last telephone pole. It is as ridiculous as that.

The members opposite sit back, go on about the Internet and want to see the whole world connected. All these political speeches are very impressive, but the regions are being left to fend for themselves.

I would therefore ask my colleague if this is a situation he sees in his riding, on the outskirts of Quebec City.

**Mr. Pierre de Savoye:** Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague raises an important point. Let me tell you about my riding of Portneuf and in particular the Portneuf RCM.

In the Portneuf RCM, there are a lot of exchange areas. And within some of these exchange areas, there are long distance charges to call from one community to another, even if there are no long distance charges to make a call to Quebec City.

Do you see what impact this has? The Portneuf RCM is a social environment. People have lived in these communities for generations now. And since there are long distance charges, for instance, from Saint-Raymond to Saint-Marc-des Carrières, some people will forgo making phone calls.

I know some older people who have lived all their lives in the Portneuf area, who have worked there, have raised their families and are now retired. These people can no longer afford to call their children, who live in another community only 20 or 30 kilometres away, because of the long distance charges.

Should the CRTC regulations not ensure that the people living in a social environment like Portneuf have the opportunity to call members of their own family? Or is their only purpose to allow major corporations to lower their long distance charges?

Something does not make sense here, and the government is not addressing the issue, and I think my colleague shares my concern.

**Mr. Odina Desrochers (Lotbinière, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, my question will be very short. I think the member for Portneuf will be able to answer it immediately.

What he just mentioned clearly explains one reason why more and more people are leaving our regions. What does he think the federal government should do to stop the exodus to the large urban centres?

**Mr. Pierre de Savoye:** Mr. Speaker, young people are indeed leaving our regions and people who need medical care are moving to the city.

The solution is simple, however. Let us give the regions affordable telephone access everywhere. Let us eliminate long distance charges within an area that forms a single social and economic environment, such as the Portneuf area. That would solve a lot of problems. It is possible.

Feasible proposals have been made by Quebec Tel and Télébec, among others. One such system has been implemented in the United States. The government must take action in this regard.

**Mr. Antoine Dubé (Lévis-et-Chutes-de-la-Chaudière, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, it is now my turn to take part in this debate on the Speech from the Throne. I must say that I am not doing so with much enthusiasm, because, as many observers pointed out when it was read in the other place, I found it was very dull and lacked substance.

It was not the fault of our new governor general, who read it very well, but it was so dull that I saw people who were nearly falling asleep, even though they had taken the precaution of standing while it was being read. They did not find it very lively.

I must say that the first three throne speeches delivered by this government since I was elected in 1993 were not very lively either.

• (1705)

In my opinion, this dull and vague speech, which makes no real commitments, is a screen for a certain government strategy. I think the government intends to tinker with the rules under which the next referendum will be held in Quebec. It has raised the issue of the majority; it has challenged the principle of a simple majority, which is accepted throughout the world.

Newfoundland joined the Canadian federation, after two referendums, with a majority of 52%. Several countries joined the European Economic Community with 51% of the vote. This principle is universally accepted.

It was even confirmed in Mont-Tremblant, where the intergovernmental affairs minister hosted a seminar. Several experts confirmed this principle, including some from Scotland. But the minister still wants to review the rules concerning the majority needed in a referendum.

In the throne speech, there is talk about a clear question. In the referendum on the Charlottetown accord, in 1992, voters had to vote without having seen the accord. How is that for a clear question? Voters were asked whether they supported an accord they had never seen. Many voters had never got a copy.

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Like the hon. member for Portneuf said, however, it does not take a great deal of time to examine this speech. The main problem with it is what it does not say. Just like the member for Lévis-et-Chutes-de-la-Chaudière, I was disappointed not to find in this speech a single word on shipbuilding. Yet, 160,000 people sent the Prime Minister a postcard asking for a new shipbuilding policy.

This week, I heard industry officials acknowledge the fact following an emotional outburst from a Reform member who was wondering why this sector should be supported. We will deal with this Reform member in due course. The department official's reply was "No, we are not doing anything special in support of shipbuilding". This prompted me to say that was exactly what we were criticizing the Liberal government for: not doing anything special for shipbuilding.

In one country in the world that is blessed with the largest marine area, three oceans and the longest interior seaway in the world, a country that does much trading, the shipbuilding industry currently accounts for only 0.4%. Yet, our country is among those with the heaviest marine traffic per capita. There is something wrong with this picture. At any rate, I will have the opportunity to pursue the matter when a private member's bill comes up for debate in the House next Tuesday.

The title of the speech from the Throne is "Building a Higher Quality of Life for All Canadians". What about the quality of life? While 62.7% of Americans are employed, only 59.5% of Canadians are.

Granted, the unemployment rate has decreased, but only 40% of Canadians who lose their job qualify for EI. What a beautiful country. The other 60% have to rely on social assistance, which, as we know, is a provincial responsibility.

Other members addressed transfer payments. Let me quote a startling figure: since the Liberals took office, there are 500,000 more children living in poverty. These children live below the poverty line, which means that their parents are poor.

Moreover, our productivity rate is only 81.3% that of the United States. Over the past 20 years, the average actual income has shrunk by about \$142 annually.

• (1710)

Things are not getting better. I can see why the government is saying that we must build a better quality of life. That statement may mean that the government has finally realized that there is a problem. If so, then the Prime Minister should stop saying that Canada is the best country in the world, because it is not necessarily true.

In 1998, the actual per capita income was \$29,000. This figure includes high income earners. In the U.S., it is \$46,000.

Any country where the quality of life is generally good should invest in training its workers. Canada ranks 13th in that regard. As for research and development, we are dead last among the G-7 nations. The government boasts about a knowledge-based economy, when in fact scientific research institutions and centres have suffered such deep cuts that they have not yet made it back to the 1995 level.

The Minister of Finance managed to achieve a zero deficit. He even generated surpluses. I do not know what his objective is for the next five years. It may be that he is aiming for a surplus of close to \$100 billion, this at a time when there are more and more poor and middle-income families. When we talk about middle-income families, that includes of course some high-income earners. This means that the situation is even worse for low-income families.

Today, there was a demonstration on the front lawn of parliament. There has never been so many homeless people in Toronto, Vancouver, Montreal and all the other major cities across Canada. Those people have nowhere to go. They have to rely on soup kitchens. It does not make any sense to keep on repeating that Canada is the very best country in the world.

This speech does not talk about matters over which the federal government has full jurisdiction. What little substance there is in the throne speech deals with matters of provincial jurisdiction. It is a shame, and we can never denounce it enough. I sometimes tune in to open line shows. People seem to think that it is only in Quebec that waiting rooms are crowded. The situation is the same everywhere, in Ontario and elsewhere. Why? Because of drastic cuts to transfer payments.

When questioned, the minister of Finance suggests that fewer cuts are being made and he even tries to pass these off as increases.

This is a bland and unsubstantial speech, but the little substance that can be found in it is indeed very subtle. It reflects an increasing invasion of provincial jurisdictions. The will to impede Quebec democracy by interfering in the referendum rules is obvious.

All the Liberals have to do is mind their own business. It is up to Quebecers, and Quebecers alone, to decide their future.

**Mr. André Harvey (Chicoutimi, PC):** Mr. Speaker, when my colleague spoke about a dull speech that lacked substance, I am sure he was not talking about his speech but about the throne speech.

I want to congratulate him and to take this opportunity to commend him for his work on shipyards and also to point out the fact that he has the full co-operation of our party on this most important issue.

Since the member is always serious and very sensible, I would like to benefit from his expertise. I noted that he talked a lot about poverty.

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• (1715)

Poverty is somewhat hidden because people believe it is linked to the unemployment rate, at present. One must never forget that the unemployed who are no longer eligible for EI benefits become welfare recipients, and then we lose track of them.

I think poverty has become the biggest problem in the country. A lot of people are suffering, people who work part time, people who have temporary jobs that pay very little, less than the minimum required to make a decent living.

I would like to ask my colleague, in this the international year of action to fight poverty, if he would seriously consider implementing a guaranteed minimum income program in Canada. Canada is said to be a rich country for a few people. Would the fact of being Canadian not justify having access, at a certain age, to a guaranteed minimum income to be able to meet one's basic needs, which a very large part of Canada's population cannot do?

I would like to ask him if he knows of a study on the validity of the concept of a guaranteed minimum income for all Canadians at age 18 or 21, which would allow them to get by until they can get a better paying job.

**Mr. Antoine Dubé:** Mr. Speaker, I almost turned red—in spite of myself—at hearing a member of another party compliment me. I thank him for his compliments. I did not expect this kind of comments from him, but I am greatly honored.

He asked me an interesting question. I remember that, when I was sitting on the Standing Committee on Human Resources Development, several people had indeed raised this issue with us.

I do not want to speak on behalf of my party. I want to express a personal opinion. Because of shared jurisdictions in a federal system, the issue is very complex. On the social union agreement alone, there are differences of opinion between Quebec and the other provinces. Whether one is a sovereigntist or a federalist, the hon. member for Chicoutimi knows well that, when Quebec's interests are close to one's heart, one cannot ignore certain things on the federal level when the government wants to interfere in provincial jurisdictions.

I believe that, in the current context, a guaranteed minimum income in a confederate state or a federation would be very difficult because there must be a lot of consultation and co-ordination between the different governments.

In a sovereign Quebec, this would be possible and I would be one of the main proponents of this. Following the by-election in Hull—Aylmer, if he wants to keep his seat in Chicoutimi, the hon. member should consider joining the Bloc Québécois to ask for the same thing as we have been asking. Perhaps a guaranteed minimum income under a sovereigntist government in Quebec would then be possible.

**Mr. René Canuel (Matapédia—Matane, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I have a comment to make.

Mr. Forget, who was a Liberal minister 20 years ago, made a study on a guaranteed minimum wage. This study said that such a program was possible. As my colleague for Lévis-et-Chutes-de-la-Chaudière said, it would be very much easier for us if we were sovereign. Even in Canada, however, it surely is possible.

I would like to ask my colleague for Lévis-et-Chutes-de-la-Chaudière a question. It is true that there are poor people everywhere, including 1.5 million children. In our regions, it is even worse. What could the member say to the government to convince it to listen up, to open its heart and to help the poor in our regions?

• (1720)

**Mr. Antoine Dubé:** Mr. Speaker, my answer would be that government members should do what the member for Matapédia—Matane does.

They should do what he does. He brings the problems of his constituents before the House. We should not do like the Liberal members, who try to sell indefensible Liberal policies, such as employment insurance cuts, in their ridings.

This is unacceptable. They should do what my colleague does and stand up for their constituents.

[English]

**Mr. John Harvard (Charleswood St. James—Assiniboia, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the distinguished member for Winnipeg North—St. Paul. It gives me great pleasure to address the House in reply to the recent Speech from the Throne.

I am a proud member of the club of 1988. November 21 will mark my 11th anniversary as a member of the House, representing the voters in the west end of Winnipeg first for the riding of Winnipeg—St. James and now, following redistribution in 1997, the riding of Charleswood St. James—Assiniboia.

In those 11 years I have witnessed much change, most of it for the better. I spent my first five years on the opposition benches during the Mulroney years. I am quite sure you remember them well, Mr. Speaker, even though you were not here.

I recall the letters and phone calls I received in those days. People were down on their federal government, and some of them were even down on their country. There were issues like the divisive constitutional changes proposed at Meech Lake and Charlottetown, the bitter debate over free trade, the soaring deficit and debt, and an economic recession thrown in for good measure. All those issues left many Canadians feeling pessimistic about their futures.

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In late 1993 the country changed for the better with the election of a new government, bringing in a new approach and some new directions. The new Liberal government embarked on an ambitious plan to put Canadians back to work and to restore stability and credibility to the nation's finances. We have worked hard to rebuild the foundations of Canada. We have worked hard to restore the confidence of Canadians in the future.

I am proud to say that in short order the government transformed the record deficit of \$42 billion that we inherited from our predecessors to two consecutive balanced budgets, with a third on the way, and a growing budget surplus. As a result interest rates have fallen sharply, driving the economy to create, it is hard to believe, nearly two million jobs since we took office in the fall of 1993.

In my province of Manitoba the federal government's economic policies have helped push the unemployment rate down to 5.4%. That is one of the lowest in the country, if not the lowest.

With the nation's finances firmly under control and the economy growing, the government has been able to make key reinvestments in social and economic programs. That is something Canadians want us to do.

For example, research and development funding has been boosted significantly. Health care funding has been increased by \$11.5 billion, of which my province of Manitoba will receive \$425 million. We have improved support for those pursuing post-secondary education through changes to the tax system and by introducing the millennium scholarship fund.

Our infrastructure renewal programs have seen some \$6 billion invested across the country improving everything from community centres to highways, including a number of projects in my riding of Charleswood St. James—Assiniboia.

Despite what the opposition may want Canadians to believe, we have begun cutting taxes in the last three budgets, or effectively over the past three budgets, to about \$16.5 billion. Average families in my riding earning \$50,000 will see their federal taxes fall by \$550.

• (1725)

This is only the beginning. We stand today before a new century confident in the future of our country. All Canadians can be proud of our achievements as an independent and prosperous country with a dynamic economy and a strong and democratic society. As the United Nations consistently reminds us, Canada is the best place to live in the world. That declaration has come from the United Nations for the last six years.

Canadians are confident that despite a rapidly changing world where technology, knowledge and creativity are the driving forces of the new economy, Canada will succeed. Maintaining and

enhancing our standard of living require a comprehensive strategy to take us into the 21st century. The throne speech boldly sets out that strategy.

The government's vision for the future includes a commitment to Canada's children and youth, which is a very good start; the building of a dynamic economy; further strengthening our health care system; ensuring the quality of our environment; building stronger communities; improving the relationship with aboriginal peoples; and advancing Canada's place in the world. It is large order. It is an ambitious agenda, but it is something that we simply have to do on behalf of all Canadians.

Our plan for the next two to five years is comprehensive: first, increase maternity and parental leave benefits; second, a federal provincial agreement on more supports for early childhood development, which is very important; third, more after tax money in the hands of families; fourth, more family friendly workplaces; fifth, modernization of family law; sixth, a third significant investment in the national child benefit; and seventh, strengthened learning opportunities through an expanded SchoolNet. That is real support for Canadian families in the Canadian way.

While hon. members opposite profess to offer so-called solutions to the country's woes, the government has delivered and is preparing to deliver even more. I think Canadians recognize this. The phone calls and letters I receive these days are much more optimistic and much more positive about our future than the ones I received 10 or 11 years ago.

I want to be very frank. This is not to say that all is well and that the government can afford to rest on its laurels. That is not the truth. There are all kinds of things to do to keep on building this great country. There is a lot to be done.

For example, in my home area of Canada in the west, prairie farmers find themselves in the midst of one of the worst agricultural periods since the Great Depression. The Liberal government has responded with a \$1.5 billion income assistance program designed and implemented in partnership with the provinces and stakeholders.

Many argue that \$1.5 billion is not enough. It would be more accurate to say that not enough of it has been paid out so far. Federal assistance to prairie farmers has recently been boosted by an additional \$170 million, something announced by the agriculture minister just days ago, raising the total federal emergency aid to farmers to over a billion dollars. This is over and above ongoing federal support payments of \$600 million to agriculture.

Having grown up on a farm in southern Manitoba around the community of Glenboro, I understand and greatly sympathize with the plight of prairie farmers. I would like to see existing income assistance moneys paid out as soon as possible.

This is only part of the solution. In the Speech from the Throne the government reaffirmed its long term commitment to Canada's

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farmers. We will work to reduce foreign export subsidies at the upcoming WTO meetings in Seattle.

The government also reaffirmed the importance of biotechnology research to the future of Canada's agriculture industry and pledged additional support. In addition, the government is committed to helping prairie farmers by building on the work already done by Judge Estey and Mr. Kroeger in their reports on the grain transportation system.

• (1730)

The government must ensure that there is greater competition within the system and that producers receive the benefits through lower transportation costs.

I will comment briefly on the importance of ongoing communication between the government and the public. I recently had the honour of heading up a caucus task force on the four western provinces. That task force was mandated to complement the work of the existing western Liberal caucus by consulting with western Canadians about what the government's priorities should be as we approach the new millennium.

Without prejudicing the contents of the report, which I expect will be released very soon, western Canadians overwhelmingly welcomed the opportunity to be consulted on what the government's priorities should be as we enter the new millennium.

The throne speech reflects many of the comments that my task force heard during our consultations. The commitment to further tax cuts while reinvesting in the social safety net, the commitment to further investments in research and development and improvements to our infrastructure, and ensuring that Canada's children and families are a priority are all important issues for western Canadians. The government is listening to western Canadians, indeed to all Canadians, and it is responding to what it is hearing.

The throne speech provides an inspiring vision to take Canada into the new millennium. As the Prime Minister so boldly stated, Canada will be the place to be in the 21st century.

**Mr. Gordon Earle (Halifax West, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I was pleased to hear the hon. member mention that our society needs a dynamic economy. He spoke about more money being in one's hands after taxes, which is very important, but in order for people to have more money they must have jobs.

I want to direct the hon. member's attention to an issue that is very important to those of us who live in the maritimes, the issue of a national shipbuilding policy. The throne speech made no mention of that issue whatsoever and yet it is an issue that has been brought forward on many occasions and presented to the federal government as a very pressing concern for those living in coastal areas. Management, workers and many people are supporting the idea of

a national shipbuilding policy, a policy that is aimed at bringing about some very productive employment for the people who have the skills and training necessary to perform that work.

Did the hon. member see anything in the throne speech that gives any hope or any promise for a national shipbuilding policy for Canada?

**Mr. John Harvard:** Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member from Halifax wants to gain insight into this issue, I invite him to read the report by the Liberal caucus representing Atlantic Canada. He will find that reading very interesting. The report contains a lot of information on the issue of a shipbuilding policy.

If the hon. member from Halifax wants to be updated on what government members are doing and saying with respect to shipbuilding in Atlantic Canada, I want him to read that caucus report. It is good reading.

**Mr. Rey D. Pagtakhan (Winnipeg North—St. Paul, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I congratulate Her Excellency the Governor General for delivering the Speech from the Throne with an eloquence that befits the inspiring vision of the Government of Canada for the 21st century, that is building a higher quality of life for all Canadians.

On behalf of the constituents of Winnipeg North—St. Paul, I pledge that we share this vision and are prepared to make it a reality. It has been my privilege to have served them in the House for a little over a decade.

This House is a very special place, indeed, where openness of hearts and openness of minds are a way of life, where the true power of co-operation reveals the very best in our nation and the very best for our nation, a democratic society with responsible government and a citizenry committed to hard work, integrity and justice.

• (1735)

The quality of life in Canada speaks for itself. For six years in a row, Canada has been deemed by the United Nations as the best country in the world in which to live. As we cherish this honour, let us reflect once more on our country's past, as did the Prime Minister in his response to the Speech from Throne when he said that Canada is a triumph of will over geography and economics.

Indeed, the departing 20th century has been a challenge to Canada. The Prime Minister noted that in a century of tyranny, of brutal dictatorships, of human rights oppression and of growing gaps between the haves and have nots, Canadians gave their lives so that others could live in freedom. He said Canada embraced a charter of rights and freedoms and developed an advanced system of social security and a social safety net.

He went on to say that in a century of great economic progress, of entrepreneurship and innovation, and of education, Canada grew

from a small agrarian society to become one of the leading industrialized countries in the world and the only major country in the world to have all its schools linked to the Internet.

These Canadian successes define the conscience and the strength of our nation's will as a people.

The Prime Minister went on to emphasize that in a century where artistic production has expanded as never before, Canadians occupy a place of honour. I just saw the Minister of Canadian Heritage beaming with pride and joy, and rightly so.

The sum of all these achievements equates to our Canadian genius. It is this Canadian genius that the Government of Canada applied to succeed in eliminating the \$42 billion national deficit, reducing the double digit unemployment rate, restoring our collapsing physical infrastructure and balancing the books of the nation.

It is this Canadian genius that guided the Government of Canada in the creation of the national child benefit program, the establishment of the Canada millennium scholarship fund, the restoration of \$11.5 billion transfer payments for medicare and the increase in the budget for research, innovation and development.

Canadians have watched the government lead the country from a nation of despair to a nation of success.

Even as Canada rightfully basks today in the quality of life of our people, we are the first as a people to acknowledge that we can do better for ourselves and for the world.

The Speech from the Throne defines our national vision for Canada in the 21st century and our plan to turn our vision of today into the reality of tomorrow.

The Prime Minister spoke of the need for a comprehensive strategy for leadership in the knowledge economy and for promoting our interests and projecting our values in the world, a strategy that integrates the economy, social policy and the environment.

He sees that the role of a national government today is to represent the future to the present, is sometimes to act directly, sometimes to work in partnership, sometimes to create a framework for the private sector and sometimes simply to lead by example. He sees that to attain our national vision and meet our national objectives, we must work with Canadians to achieve them.

As members of parliament, we come to this special place to make a difference in the quality of life of our fellow citizens, not only for a few of them, not for some of them, not even for most of them, but for all of them.

This is what the Government of Canada has in mind when it commits to develop our children and youth, build a dynamic

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economy, strengthen health care and quality care, ensure the quality of our environment, build stronger communities, strengthen the relationship with Canada's aboriginal peoples, and advance Canada's place in the world.

As Canada beholds the dawn of the new era, let us be reminded that our greatness as a nation rests as much in our past as in our future. The greatness of a nation is tested when it creates opportunities out of challenges.

● (1740 )

There is one such challenge that touches the heart of the Canadian experience. I speak of the challenge in rural Canada which at once becomes a challenge for all of Canada.

The farm income crisis is real and painful, and we worry very much about the farmers affected and their families, their sons, daughters and grandchildren. For most of them, this crisis is a matter of survival: food on the table, security from bankruptcy and a sense of confidence in tomorrow. That is why the Government of Canada has announced an additional \$170 million over and above the over \$1 billion that is already in our disaster aid program.

We in the government caucus continue to preoccupy ourselves with this very vital issue. We are determined to examine all options for a solution and we will search for new approaches, such as easing the cost of transportation and handling of grain.

As chair of the northern and western federal Liberal caucus, I share with colleagues the sense of duty and dedication on the part of our members to contribute our share to the future of our nation. Rural Canada and our farmers are a vital part of that future.

We want a Canada with a higher quality of life for the whole of our citizenry where every Canadian from every region shares the blessings of this great nation. Let not our experiences of pain detract from our sense of belonging to this great country.

We challenge ourselves to lend our ears and hear with equal acuity the voices that come from all regions of our country. Although not everything can possibly be done, we must have the wisdom to reconcile them all, to reconcile the diversity of our needs and aspirations just as we reconcile the diversity of our talents and experiences.

Early at the turn of this now departing century, then prime minister, Sir Wilfrid Laurier, while beholding a model of Gothic architecture in England, said:

The cathedral was made of granite, oak and marble. It is the image of the nation I wish to become. For here, I want the granite to remain granite, the oak to remain oak, the marble to remain marble. Out of these elements, I will build a nation great among the nations of the world.

Now I behold a parliament whose governor general is from the Pacific and whose members of the Senate and the House of

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Commons come from varied roots, a parliament where we hear the sound of many tongues and accents, see the sight of many colours, feel the beatings of many caring hearts and distill the wisdom of many minds.

And thus, I am confident that working together this parliament can achieve our common vision: building a higher quality of life for all Canadians. We can say, with resolute confidence, the great future is indeed Canada.

**Mr. Gurmant Grewal (Surrey Central, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the comments made by the hon. member. He talked about Canada's vast resources and the fact that Canada is a vast country. He also bragged about the Liberal government's policies for Canada.

We know our population is low. We know that Canada needs a larger market for our goods and services. With the fast changes that are taking place in our country and in the international arena and the fast changes that are taking place in the global village, which is globalization, one policy that is very important for a nation is the foreign policy.

There is not even one word about foreign policy in the throne speech. This is a policy that is like a thread in a necklace which keeps all the beads together. A foreign policy is the policy on which the other policies of a nation depend. I am talking about trade, the economy, the fiscal health of a country, investment, defence, security, immigration, human and natural resources and so on.

Since a good, sound, solid foreign policy is very important to a nation, I would like to ask the member why there is not even a single word about foreign policy in the throne speech.

• (1745)

**Mr. Rey D. Pagtakhan:** Mr. Speaker, I am really saddened that the member stood in his place and said there is nothing in the Speech from the Throne on foreign policy. I wonder whether indeed he has read the Speech from the Throne. Perhaps I should call to his attention pages 21 and 22 where it says, "Canada's place in the world". In the interest of time, the member should accept that that phrase speaks of Canada's foreign policy in the world, and that is to care for everyone.

**Mr. Gordon Earle (Halifax West, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I listened with interest to the hon. member's speech. I noticed he spoke about everybody sharing in the blessings of this great nation and the importance of that happening. In order for some communities to share in the blessings that this nation has, there is a need for basic infrastructure within a lot of small communities right across Canada.

In my riding of Halifax West many small communities could certainly benefit from the Canada infrastructure works program.

Quite some time ago I wrote to the Prime Minister on that issue and got a response that indicated it would depend largely upon the provinces and the municipalities wanting to have such a program. My understanding is that the provinces have now come on board and want the program. The Federation of Canadian Municipalities has written to support such a program.

The evidence has shown from the past program that it is a useful way of getting very basic infrastructure such as roads, sewage and water systems into many communities that would not otherwise be able to have them.

Does the hon. member see anything in the throne speech that would give any hope for a program that would address the basic infrastructure needs of our communities?

**Mr. Rey D. Pagtakhan:** Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased the member raised that question and shared with us his concerns for citizens of Canada. Therefore I am obliged to remind the member, and all members of the House, that pages 12 to 16 give the exact plan of the government on the infrastructure for Canada for the 21st century.

It will encompass not only the physical infrastructure but the information, knowledge and cultural infrastructures as well. In other words, the sum total of our resources will be used so that we will all be stronger. It is in the throne speech and the member can expect a real hope of attainment on that issue.

**Mr. Chuck Cadman (Surrey North, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with my colleague from Surrey Central.

I am pleased to have the opportunity to reply to the Speech from the Throne which is supposed to explain how parliament intends to proceed with public business.

The government recessed this place for over four months. Canadians must be sorely disappointed with the lack of substance announced for the current session. There must be particular disappointment in the whole area of justice. I will highlight some of the shortcomings in what was presented by the government in its speech.

Some have commented that a Speech from the Throne is intended to very generally indicate the direction of the government in the coming months. It is often flowery with little substance, and that is understood. Just what did it say to indicate where the government has its beliefs, its plans and its focus?

We have often heard of the don't worry, be happy attitude of the Prime Minister. His arrogance has become increasingly obvious. In spite of valid criticism, he always answers that only he knows what is best for Canadians. His answer to citizens who do not like the way of things is that they can always move to another country. What has he said through the Speech from the Throne?



*The Address*

His statement that “Canadians are justifiably proud of having built communities where citizens feel safe”, shows he knows very little about the average Canadian. Now that he has beefed up his own personal security through the RCMP, and now that he expends hundreds of thousands of dollars in maintaining that security, he jumps to the conclusion that all Canadians feel safe.

• (1750 )

The most recent Statistics Canada studies on public perception of crime show that Canadians do not feel safe. Urban residents, females and seniors do not feel safe walking alone in their neighbourhoods at night. More and more Canadians are cocooning themselves within their homes at night. More and more Canadians are spending more and more on deadbolts, alarm systems, guard dogs and self defence courses.

The throne speech claim to citizens feeling safe rings hollow to most Canadians.

The speech goes on with more flowery words that on closer inspection contain little substance. It talks of a reintroduction of legislation to reform the youth justice system. The government is acting only to quell the strong dissatisfaction of Canadians with the Young Offenders Act. Even the Minister of Justice accepts its failures.

Unfortunately, this government proposes little more than a name change of the current legislation. It has only made minor improvements in limited areas. In most of the significant portions, it does not legislate the process. It leaves it up to the discretion of the courts.

The throne speech promises reform of the youth justice system, but in reality Bill C-3 is little more than a puff piece. There has been glitter, there has been spin doctoring and there has been promise, but there is little substance to the youth criminal justice act.

The throne speech promises to combat drug trafficking. The government likely made a similar promise 30 years ago. It is no closer to solving the drug problem today than it was then. In spite of billions of tax dollars spent on the war on drugs, we still have traffickers in our schools. We still see that the vast majority of crimes are related in one way or another to drugs and all we get from the government is vague promises. What we do not see is concrete action to address the illegal use of drugs in this country.

The throne speech mentions focusing attention on international crime, including money laundering, terrorism and the smuggling of people, drugs and guns. We have seen how prepared this government is to the problem of people smuggling.

Four boatloads of Chinese migrants were smuggled into my home province of British Columbia over the past few months. Taxpayers face a potential bill of \$52 million or \$123,000 per

person for the 420 individuals we have chosen to detain. All indications are that more may also attempt to enter Canada in the same manner. We have all heard the minister's plan. She is waiting for the north Pacific winter storms to deal with the rusty old ships.

This government has few, if any, ideas or programs to properly address crime within Canada and now it talks of addressing international crime. It is all just talk.

The throne speech mentions strengthening the capacity of the RCMP. However, it was this government that put the RCMP in such a fiscal straitjacket that the only training facility was forced to close. Patrol cars are parked because the force cannot afford tires. Planes were grounded, boats were docked, investigations were shelved due to lack of resources. My home province of British Columbia is already short about 400 federal police officers. My own community of Surrey has some 70 vacant positions in a complement of some 370.

This government operates in a most peculiar manner. First it rapes our national police force of its ability to function through budget freezes or inadequate resources. Then at some future politically opportune time it will ride in on its white horse amid much fanfare to announce additional funding. In the meantime our communities suffer from inadequate policing and lose valued police officers who leave for other opportunities because of frustrations and obstacles to doing their job. All in all there is little promise for Canadians in the area of innovative justice programs.

I turn now to a couple of areas important to Canadians but which were not even mentioned in the throne speech. There was no mention of the child pornography issue. On January 15, 1999, 10 months ago, Mr. Justice Duncan Shaw ruled that the present law on possession of child pornography was unconstitutional. On January 16 I wrote to the Attorney General of British Columbia urging him to appeal the decision, which he subsequently did.

On January 21 I wrote to the justice minister to encourage her to immediately introduce amending legislation for the sake and the safety of our children. On January 26 approximately 70 Liberal members and senators urged the minister to introduce new legislation, then promptly voted against a Reform Party motion to do just that. The minister merely made public statements that in her legal determination the British Columbia Court of Appeal would uphold the constitutionality of the current law. Well, we all know just how wrong she was. The appeal court ruled that the law was unconstitutional.

I wrote the minister once again urging her to introduce legislation to clearly define for the courts the intent of parliament on the possession of children pornography and still no action. Instead, the minister now wants Canadians to wait for the Supreme Court of Canada to rule on the case which will not be heard until January. The decision may take months.

*The Address*

• (1755)

Meanwhile our justice system is left in chaos over this law. Some prosecutors are holding charges in abeyance until the supreme court decision. Some investigations are being shelved because scarce police resources cannot be wasted on legislation that may ultimately be unenforceable. Convicted offenders are now proceeding with appeals. And there is nothing from the government in the throne speech.

Another issue of importance to Canadians is the raising of the age for consensual sex. The Mulroney Tories lowered the age from 16 to 14 years, meaning that a 14 year old can consent to having sexual relations with an adult. Canadians everywhere feel that this law subjects young people to abuse by predatory adults. There is a clear cry for the return to the age of 16. Canadians believe that those 14 and 15 are far too susceptible to coercion to be making informed decisions about sexual activity with older individuals.

In fact in a recent case, two escaped sex offenders wound up with a 14 year old girl. Eric Wanamaker, 51 years old, charged with sexually assaulting this young girl, was acquitted when the judge ruled her conflicting testimony led him to believe that she had consented. It is difficult to believe that a 14 year old has the wherewithal to make a free and informed consent with a 51 year old, especially when we consider emotional maturity and power.

There is no mention of the issue of consent in the throne speech. It does not seem to be a priority for the government. Once again the government will probably study the issue to death and if anything ever does get done, it will be watered down in an ineffective way.

To sum up, the throne speech contained a number of smooth and flowery words. It contained little if any substance. Much of it contained issues that have been around for throne speech after throne speech. It did not address many of the issues of concern to Canadians. It leaves us with poor expectations. I am disappointed and Canadians are disappointed.

**Mr. Gurmant Grewal (Surrey Central, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, on this side of the House we were looking for a useful throne speech that the Liberals took so long to write. Instead of high hopes what we got was a hopeless, empty shell of a speech. There is a lack of vision for the 21st century by the Liberal government and the Prime Minister confessed that.

If I had written that speech, I would have given a vision to build a strong and wide bridge for all Canadians to cross to the next millennium to find peace, hope, prosperity and opportunities for all.

With the fast changes that have been taking place in the global village in the past decade, the foreign policy of a nation becomes increasingly important. Foreign affairs was not mentioned in the throne speech. There was not a single word about it. A nation's policies on trade, the economy, fiscal health, investment, defence,

security, immigration, human resources, natural resources and other issues depend on good sound foreign policy, but there was not a single word about it in the throne speech. There was no mention at all.

Traditionally we have had a niche in the world arena. In the world, Canada has little military interest, no weapons sales interest. We have no hidden agenda. We have no threatening trade interests. But the current Liberal government is eroding our reputation as a potential world leader having integrity and fairness. The Liberal government's lack of a plan and its track record since 1993 show Canadians a weak spirit and a weak political will to make any leaps and bounds at the international level.

The Prime Minister has missed many opportunities for our country. His missing King Hussein's funeral is typical of what he has done to our international reputation. He did not allow B.C.'s emergency response team to go to Taiwan after the devastating earthquake there. The Prime Minister also disappointed the people of Turkey in terms of helping them with the first of the two earthquakes. He responded very late to the crisis in East Timor. His policies were on the wrong track when India and Pakistan conducted nuclear tests. The government was on the verge of declaring a trade war with our largest trading partner earlier this year.

• (1800)

There are numerous examples. The decisions concerning Iraq and Kosovo were done deals before they came to the floor of parliament. It was meaningless to have take note debates without a vote. It did not provide an opportunity for the government to listen to anyone in the House or to parliament.

The foreign policy of the government has many faults. There is not a word about foreign policy in the throne speech. Over a century ago Sir John A. Macdonald hoped that Canada would be a source of strength, not weakness. Our bilateral and multilateral foreign policy requires the integration of diplomatic, military and economic dimensions of policy into a coherent framework grounded in sound principles and oriented toward promoting long term security and prosperity for Canada and Canadians.

Therefore the official opposition and the Reform Party, as the government in waiting, released its interim foreign policy paper this week, *Canada in the New Millennium: A New Look at Foreign Policy*. It is a sincere effort by the official opposition to present a thoughtful, strategic new foreign policy approach consistent with Canada's national interest.

It is a program of action that will permit coherence, encourage consistency and retain moral purpose. It seeks to restore our country's international credibility, shamefully squandered over the past 30 years by Liberal and Tory governments. It is designed to advance our security and prosperity, and it allows our country to adapt to the ever changing dynamics of world affairs.

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Canada's influence in the world has steadily declined. In the last several years a small elite group has formulated our foreign policy. Many of its assumptions stem from a 30 year old foreign policy that needs to be rethought. The Liberals, beginning with Mr. Trudeau, have ignored, for example, the importance of NATO.

Canada belongs to some 100 international organizations, some of which do not even exist. There may not be any analysis done on cost benefits or value for tax dollars. Our friends and foes wonder what are our national goals. Canada is becoming the laughing stock of the international community.

The current government uses catch phrases like soft power and human security but has never explained what they mean. In fact it has endangered our long term economic and political interests.

The government's foreign policy is not enhancing our security and prosperity. This government and the Tories before it eroded Canada's military capability to the point that they have caused our international influence to decline. Except for its initiatives to ban land mines, the government has failed to address drug and small weapon smuggling, organized crime, illegal immigrants, gangs, money laundering and industrial espionage, to name only a few areas.

There are infamous reports of corruption and wrongdoing in our foreign embassies. The government does only three things: first, it punishes whistleblowers; second, it covers up the wrongdoing; and third, it does nothing. The government has practically done nothing to address this serious issue. Based on a constituent's concern I discovered some wrongdoing, took action and attempted to fix the problem. Our image is being tarnished and our abilities at the international level have been curtailed as these situations go unaddressed.

We have foreign missions where people are lining up and waiting for many hours. They have no washrooms, drinking water or covered facilities. Next door to these places are the embassies and high commissions from other countries that provide those basic facilities, not to mention air conditioning.

• (1805)

Our foreign policy has been hostile to certain nations and discriminatory toward others. The immigration head tax is a good example of that, and so is the inconsistency of the government's handing out foreign aid in billions of dollars.

The Liberals continue to maintain and promise that they will provide 0.7% of the GNP to foreign aid, but actually they have been able to give only one-third of that. The question is not one of more or less but one of fair commitment. They deliver a message of false hope to the poor and starving people and the governments of the world.

The government delivers billions of dollars of our foreign aid unaudited, without transparency, without parliamentary review

and without compatibility with our national interest. It ensures that it is unaccountable by refusing to establish the aid effectiveness measurement asked for by the management of CIDA. Other than for humanitarian reasons, our foreign aid should be attached to good governance and an acceptable human rights record.

The Liberals do not target our support to credible organizations, nations or even regions that are important to the Canadian interest. There is no mention of these considerations in the throne speech. Imagine, Mr. Speaker, there is no mention of foreign affairs or international trade in a speech which announces the work that the Liberals plan to do before the next election.

I know my time is limited, but I want to talk about peacemaking versus peacekeeping. I want to talk about Candu reactor trade barriers and I want to talk about plutonium, nuclear wastes and many other issues.

In conclusion, I encourage all members of the House and all Canadians to read our interim foreign policy statement on Canada and the millennium and ask the Liberals across the way to open their eyes. They should not sleep at the wheel. They should either do the job properly or get out of the way.

**Mr. Myron Thompson (Wild Rose, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I will just ask the member a very short question. Another item that was not mentioned, and if it were it was very limited, was the agricultural industry. A person would get a bit excited if the government had said some things in that agricultural policy that would give us hope, but there was absolutely nothing.

I would have even become excited if there had been a slight hint that the Liberals were to move the heritage minister out of her position and put her in charge of agriculture. The way that woman throws money around, I do not think there would be a poor farm in the country, plus they would have flags flying from every weather vane.

Would the member comment on what he feels are the real answers? Why does he feel that things like international affairs, agriculture and the grassroots native problems are not included in the throne speech in his view?

**Mr. Gurmant Grewal:** Mr. Speaker, I highly appreciate the thoughtful comments of the hon. member and I thank him for the excellent question. That is the question about the throne speech all of us are asking on the opposition benches.

The answer to that question is simple. How can the government ignore such important areas like agriculture, child pornography, defence, airline mergers and illegal immigrants coming to this country? All these areas are missing from the throne speech, even the broad base tax cuts which Canadians have been demanding for a long time. All these areas are missing just because of one reason. The government's arrogance shows that it lacks vision. The Liberals have absolutely no vision about the 21st century and

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where Canadians should be heading so confidently to look for prosperity and opportunities for all. Basically the government is lacking vision.

In one of his speeches the Prime Minister even admitted that. He said that Canada was doing very good without vision. Imagine, Mr. Speaker, if the Prime Minister had vision? The Prime Minister has absolutely no vision and he confessed that. The Liberal government is giving evidence day after day that it really has no vision.

• (1810)

**Mr. Rey D. Pagtakhan (Winnipeg North—St. Paul, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I did not intend to rise but I cannot let a sin of omission prosper. He said there was nothing on agriculture in the throne speech. Let me read one sentence at page 14:

Indeed, it is an economy in which technology can lead to greater economic stability for the primarily rural regions in which cyclical resource industries—agriculture, fisheries, forestry, mining and tourism—are the dominant sources of wealth. The government will encourage the development and adoption of new technologies in all sectors.

From now on I think we have to adopt a policy that when something comes from Reform we take it with a grain of salt.

**Mr. Gurmant Grewal:** Mr. Speaker, it is amusing to hear from the hon. member because that is the only thing mentioned in the throne speech about agriculture. I challenge the member to show me anything else.

Is there any solution to the crisis or the problem? The Liberal government, while it is figuring out if there is a crisis at all, does not know how farmers are suffering.

Speaking of foreign affairs, I ask the hon. member or any other member on the Liberal side to tell me the page in the throne speech where it talks about foreign affairs or international trade. I look forward to an answer from the hon. member.

**Mr. Bryon Wilfert (Oak Ridges, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the member talked about vision. We talk about vision on this side of the House. We are looking at matters such as rebuilding the national infrastructure.

We have a \$40 billion deficit. I remind the House that it was this government in 1993 that adopted the the proposal of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities which was wandering in the wilderness when the Tories were in power. For five years we have had a strong national infrastructure program that is being renewed in the Speech from the Throne.

As one who comes from the greater Toronto area, and as chair of the greater Toronto area caucus on our side of the House, I want to say how important this is for an area of 4.5 million people. To

reinvest in core infrastructure is extremely important for the residents of the GTA.

We talk about vision. In the Speech from the Throne we are talking about investing in the economy and technology. I realize that when we talk about investing in technology we are talking to some people here who still believe the earth is flat, but the fact is that in this case we are talking about a vision of going forward to the 21st century, not back to the 19th century.

We are looking at a program that is investing in high technology. I happen to come from an area of the greater Toronto area with probably the highest percentage in Canada of new technology in terms of computer industries. Members opposite may be working with Ouija boards over there, but from our standpoint we are looking ahead at advancement.

When it comes to vision, we know what vision is about. Fortunately our vision is forward, not backward.

**Mr. Gurmant Grewal:** Mr. Speaker, I am glad that my speech was effective enough to at least wake all of them up. The member spoke about the deficit. I ask the member, and all members on the other side of the House, why they did not balance the budget 29 years ago. Why is the deficit continuing?

They balanced the budget on the backs of taxpayers. The budget could have been balanced 29 years ago if the government increased taxes then. The budget should be balanced by eliminating waste and duplication, by reducing spending in government and by giving a tax break to Canadians.

Canada is the number one country in the G-7 for paying the highest amount of personal income taxes. That is shameful. That is a lack of vision.

• (1815)

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland):** It being 6.15 p.m., it is my duty to interrupt the proceedings of the House and to put forthwith every question necessary to dispose of the motion now before the House.

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

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

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

**Some hon. members:** Yea.

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

**Some hon. members:** Nay.

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

*And more than five members having risen:*

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

• (1845 )

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

(Division No. 53)

**YEAS**

Members

Adams	Alcock
Anderson	Assad
Assadourian	Augustine
Baker	Bakopanos
Beaumier	Béclair
Bélanger	Bellemare
Bennett	Bertrand
Bevilacqua	Blondin-Andrew
Bonwick	Boudria
Bradshaw	Bryden
Bulte	Caccia
Calder	Cannis
Caplan	Carroll
Catterall	Chamberlain
Chan	Charbonneau
Clouthier	Collenette
Copps	Cullen
DeVillers	Dhaliwal
Dion	Discepola
Dromisky	Drouin
Duhamel	Easther
Eggleton	Folco
Fontana	Fry
Gagliano	Galloway
Godfrey	Goodale
Gray (Windsor West)	Grose
Guarnieri	Harb
Harvard	Hubbard
Ianno	Jackson
Jennings	Jordan
Karygiannis	Keyes
Kilger (Stormont—Dundas—Charlottenburgh)	Kilgour (Edmonton Southeast)
Knutson	Kraft Sloan
Lastewka	Lavigne
Lee	Leung
Limoges (Windsor—St. Clair)	Lincoln
Longfield	MacAulay
Mahoney	Malhi
Maloney	Manley
Martin (LaSalle—Émard)	Matthews
McCormick	McGuire
McKay (Scarborough East)	McLellan (Edmonton West)
McTeague	McWhinney
Mifflin	Mills (Broadview—Greenwood)
Minna	Mitchell
Murray	Myers
Nault	Normand
O'Brien (Labrador)	O'Brien (London—Fanshawe)
Pagtakhan	Paradis
Parrish	Patry
Peric	Peterson
Pettigrew	Phinney
Pickard (Chatham—Kent Essex)	Pillitteri
Pratt	Proud
Provenzano	Redman
Reed	Richardson
Robillard	Rock
Saada	Scott (Fredericton)
Sekora	Shepherd
Speller	St. Denis
St-Julien	Stewart (Brant)
Stewart (Northumberland)	Szabo
Telegdi	Thibeault
Torsney	Ur

Valeri  
Volpe  
Whelan  
Wood—135

Vanclief  
Wappel  
Wilfert

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**NAYS**

Members

Abbott	Ablonczy
Alarie	Anders
Bailey	Bellehumeur
Benoit	Bergeron
Bernier (Bonaventure—Gaspé—Îles-de-la-Madeleine—Pabok)	Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville)
Bigras	Canuel
Cadman	Casey
Cardin	Chatters
Casson	Cummins
Chrétien (Frontenac—Mégantic)	Davies
Dalphon-Duval	Desjarlais
de Savoye	Dockrill
Desrochers	Dubé (Lévis-et-Chutes-de-la-Chaudière)
Doyle	Duceppe
Dubé (Madawaska—Restigouche)	Duncan
Dumas	Elley
Earle	Forseth
Epp	Gauthier
Gagnon	Godin (Acadie—Bathurst)
Girard-Bujold	Goldring
Godin (Châteauguay)	Grey (Edmonton North)
Grewal	Hanger
Guimond	Hillstrom
Harvey	Johnston
Jaffer	Laurin
Konrad	Marceau
Loubier	Mark
Marchand	Martin (Winnipeg Centre)
Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)	McNally
McDonough	Mercier
Ménard	Morrison
Meredith	Obhrai
Nystrom	Perron
Penon	Robinson
Proctor	Sauvageau
Rocheleau	Solberg
Schmidt	St-Hilaire
Solomon	Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest)
Stoffer	Vellacott
Thompson (Wild Rose)	Wayne
Wasylcia-Leis	White (North Vancouver)—83
White (Langley—Abbotsford)	

**PAIRED MEMBERS**

Asselin	Axworthy
Bachand (Saint-Jean)	Barnes
Bonin	Brien
Brown	Cauchon
Coderre	Crête
Debien	Finlay
Fournier	Graham
Guay	Iftody
Karetak-Lindell	Lalonde
O'Reilly	Picard (Drummond)
Serré	Steckle
Tremblay (Lac-Saint-Jean)	Tremblay (Rimouski—Mitis)
Turp	Venne

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

**Hon. Don Boudria (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.)** moved:

That the address be engrossed and presented to Their Excellencies the Governors General by Mr. Speaker.

(Motion agreed to)

*Adjournment Debate***ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS**

• (1850)

[*Translation*]

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

## EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

**Mr. Yvon Godin (Acadie—Bathurst, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, on October 19, 1999, I asked the Minister of Human Resources Development a question concerning a Labour Congress study that confirmed what we have known for a long time.

Women are penalized by the employment insurance reform. Ultimately, children are also penalized. In her answer, the minister ignored the substance of my question and spouted statistics, which proves clearly that the Liberal government does not care at all about women's needs.

The employment insurance plan designed by the Liberal government completely ignores the real conditions on the labour market. It is designed for men who have been working full time throughout their life.

It is about time the government woke up and realized that we are not in the 1950s anymore. Women are now on the labour market and they deserve protection under the EI plan.

The current labour market also includes a substantial number of workers in seasonal industries. The Liberal government scorns these workers. It blames unemployment on the unemployed.

It is not the fault of the workers if they cannot fish under the ice or exceed lumber quotas. The government should assume its responsibilities and invest in an infrastructure program to try to diversify these local economies.

Besides women and seasonal workers, the employment insurance program is also ignoring self-employed and part-time workers.

Instead of hiding behind statistics, the Minister of Human Resources Development should realize what is really going on in the labour market and set up an employment insurance program that really meets the needs of all workers.

The employment insurance program is at a critical point. With only one third of the jobless eligible for benefits, we are obviously dealing with a crisis.

Do the Liberals opposite not realize that their policies have real consequences and that poverty and the popularity of food banks are increasing because of the changes they made to the EI program?

There is a \$26 billion surplus in the EI fund. The Liberals are refusing to help workers, but not because they are out of money. They are refusing to meet the needs of the workers because they want to protect the interests of their bank buddies.

Enough is enough. The government should stop making the jobless feel guilty or feel like they are criminals and change the EI system to ensure that it is in sync with the realities of today's labour market.

• (1855)

Canadian workers contribute to the employment insurance fund and they should get benefits when they lose their jobs. After all, the reason we have an employment insurance program is to help workers when they are out of work.

I hope the Minister of Human Resources Development and her officials will really take note of what I said, will follow up on the issue that I raised and will amend the employment insurance program, so as to meet the needs of workers and, above all, eliminate child poverty in this country.

As we saw today on Parliament Hill, there is an increasing number of poor. This is why they came to Ottawa to protest. The changes made to employment insurance have even generated a 10% increase in the number of people going to food banks.

The Liberal government claims to be a responsible government. But a responsible government should take concrete action to eliminate poverty. This is absolutely not what this government is doing. The government must act now.

[*English*]

**Ms. Beth Phinney (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Revenue, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Canada is recognized throughout the world for its quality of life. We are committed to helping Canadian families, as the government said it would in the Speech from the Throne and in the Prime Minister's speech.

The government made a commitment to introduce legislation in this parliament to redesign parental benefits. We are extending employment insurance maternity and parental benefits from the current maximum of six months to one full year. We are making these benefits more flexible to meet the different needs of families. We are also making these benefits more accessible by increasing the number of parents eligible for support.

Presently there are several features of the EI program that are important for women. Through EI reform, every hour of work is covered and women working part time or holding multiple jobs can now be eligible for both EI regular and special benefits.

It is encouraging to see that maternity claims have remained virtually unchanged and that the duration of these benefits has

remained the same. This is despite the fact that between 1995-96 and 1997-98 the birthrate has gone down by 4.6%. Prior to EI reforms, no women working part time were eligible for EI, let alone maternity benefits.

We also know that two-thirds of those who receive the most generous family supplement are women. Fifty-eight per cent of those participating in the small weeks adjustment projects, which provide workers in high unemployment regions with higher benefits, are women. The reach back provision for the active employment measures expands eligibility for women, providing increased help for stay at home mothers to get back to the workforce.

We also have a number of initiatives outside EI aimed at helping women enter or re-enter the workforce. These initiatives include: projects to promote the self-sufficiency of lone parents, 80% of whom are women; grants to help women pursue higher education; and programs focused on helping young women at risk. Two programs, the legislated employment equity program and the federal contractors program, were introduced to ensure that women have equal access to employment opportunities.

[Translation]

Canadian women have made major gains on the labour market. They now account for close to half of our manpower, compared to only 30% in 1966. Over the past four decades, the employment rate has increased more rapidly for women than for men. In the last 20 years, that rate has been the highest among G-7 countries.

[English]

In 1998, women of all ages had lower unemployment rates than men, and in October 1999, adult women had their lowest unemployment rate since 1975, 5.8%.

Women are getting better access to knowledge based jobs. In fact, women are enrolling in university at a much higher rate than men. Over 13% of women between 18 and 29 years of age were enrolled in university in 1997 compared to about 11% of young men. The number of women with post-secondary education is rising rapidly. In 1998, 28% of working women had a university degree, up from 22% in 1990. Despite this—

• (1900)

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland):** I am very sorry but the parliamentary secretary had two minutes to respond and her time has run out.

**Ms. Beth Phinney:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask for one more minute.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland):** The parliamentary secretary has asked for one more minute. Is it agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

### *Adjournment Debate*

**Ms. Beth Phinney:** Mr. Speaker, it will be worth it if they listen.

Despite this positive news, we want to be sure that women in the workforce are provided with proper support systems. That is why we are examining the issues of accessibility to the EI program for women.

As part of EI reform, we have put in place a monitoring and assessment system. Every year we receive information about how the system is working. We are looking forward to receiving this year's monitoring and assessment report to get a better understanding of how the EI program is working.

We are committed to making sure that EI is fair and accessible to all women.

### TOBACCO

**Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis (Winnipeg North Centre, NDP):** As you are aware, Mr. Speaker, public life, especially work as a member of parliament, has its exhilarating and rewarding moments occasionally, but most of the time there is a real sense of frustration, especially when we are unable to mobilize public resources in the interests of the public good.

Tonight is one of those occasions as I revisit the issue of youth smoking. As we deal with this issue, I am certainly faced with one of those moments of very deep frustration and anger.

Since my question on October 25 on tobacco taxation, the Liberal government has blown another opportunity to strike a significant blow against youth smoking and as a result the health and lives of more Canadians will be sacrificed.

The government cut taxes on tobacco in 1994 in response to the smuggling crisis. At the same time, it promised to launch a major campaign against youth smoking. More young people are smoking today, and on top of it all, tobacco profits continue to rise.

Statistically we know that the trend to non-smoking dropped off immediately in provinces where taxes were cut in 1994. The differential over the last eight years is 24% where there were no cuts and 8% where there were cuts. In young adults, smoking rates have rebounded to pre-1989 levels.

It is bewildering as I try to conceive of what it will take or what we can do or say tonight to prompt the government and the health minister to take action.

We have heard from the scientific community that youth smoking carries the severest of all tobacco's health consequences and that youth smoking sets up the most difficult problems to overcome. We know internationally that there are health organizations and also, of course, the World Bank that endorses high tobacco taxes as a weapon against youth smoking.

*Adjournment Debate*

We know that stable high prices in neighbouring states mean a significant tax hike here will not trigger renewed smuggling. We also have Canada's leading health groups on tobacco unanimously calling for a significant \$10 federal-provincial increase in tobacco taxes.

We should all commend the work of those groups: the Canadian Cancer Society, the Non-Smokers' Rights Association, the Physicians for a Smoke-Free Canada and the Quebec Coalition for Tobacco control.

What does the government, which claims to be committed to ending youth smoking, do? It raises taxes 60 cents. There is no logical reason and no obstacle standing in the government's way from introducing significant enough tax increases to make a difference, significant enough to discourage young Canadians from needlessly endangering their health. Instead, what does the government do? It chooses to talk the talk but do nothing.

• (1905)

In closing, let me remind members opposite and the government that it is not only tobacco taxes that we are talking about. We are talking about the government's cave-in on tobacco sponsorship legislation. We are talking about the government's obstacles to and blockage of Bill S-13. It promised to bring it back in some form, but it is not here. It is buried somewhere in some Liberal caucus committee.

We are talking about the government's refusal to call the tobacco companies to task for the kind of health care costs that we are incurring as a society because of tobacco advertising and because they are pushing tobacco products on young people. We are talking about the government's commitment to spend \$100 million on tobacco cessation and smoking prevention and barely a fraction of that has been spent today.

Today I call on the minister once more to take some action. I say to the government that it is not too late. Act now for the sake of our young people and for the health of our nation.

**Mr. Roy Cullen (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the government is concerned about smoking by young people. That is in fact the key reason why it has continued to increase tobacco taxes on a regular basis.

[*Translation*]

Since the implementation of the government's anti-smuggling initiative, in 1994, the federal government and the participating provinces—Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island—have been working together to jointly increase taxes on tobacco.

[*English*]

The tobacco tax increase announced in the House on November 5 was the fourth such increase since 1994. In total, taxes on cigarettes have been increased by \$4.40 per carton in Ontario, \$5.00 per carton in Quebec, \$3.40 in New Brunswick, \$3.80 in Nova Scotia, and \$5.80 in Prince Edward Island.

We will continue to work with the provinces and enforcement agencies to implement increases in tobacco taxes in a manner that will minimize the risk of renewed contraband activity.

In addition to these tobacco tax increases, the Minister of Health has indicated that the government will intensify its efforts to reduce smoking, particularly by younger Canadians, through tough anti-tobacco advertising and upcoming labelling and information reporting regulations.

These initiatives demonstrate the government's concern with smoking and its resolve to take steps to discourage smoking by young Canadians.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland):** 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 7.08 p.m.)







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