



CANADA

# House of Commons Debates

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OFFICIAL REPORT  
(HANSARD)

**Wednesday, April 24, 2002**

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**Speaker: The Honourable Peter Milliken**

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# HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, April 24, 2002

The House met at 2 p.m.

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*Prayers*

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•(1405)

[*Translation*]

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

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

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## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[*Translation*]

### PARKINSON'S AWARENESS MONTH

**Ms. Yolande Thibeault (Saint-Lambert, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to inform hon. members and the Canadian public that the month of April has been designated Parkinson's Awareness Month by the Parkinson's Society of Canada.

Parkinson's disease is a slowly progressive neurodegenerative illness characterized by tremor, trouble speaking and difficulty with walking and balance.

Today in Canada, there are approximately 100,000 people suffering with Parkinson's, mainly older adults. Although there is no cure at present, researchers are working to develop treatments that will slow down the disease's progression, and one day they will be successful.

The Parkinson's Society of Canada and its regional partners have been involved for the past 37 years in lessening the burden of people with Parkinson's and working toward a cure, through research, education, advocacy and support services.

I invite hon. members to join with me in supporting the Parkinson's Society of Canada and the thousands of Canadians with this disease.

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[*English*]

### CUBA

**Mr. Stockwell Day (Okanagan—Coquihalla, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, in a quiet move late in March Fidel Castro banned to his own citizens the sale of personal computers, printers,

photocopiers and the necessary supplies. Cuban retailers are now only allowed to sell these goods to Castro's government. Cubans could have computers and Internet access if their government allows them.

Free speech and communication with the broader world are not something that the repressive Castro regime wants its citizens to have. Castro knows that the more people hear about freedom the more they will want it. Thousands of Canadian tourists flock to Cuba annually and our businesses seek out opportunities inside that dictatorship.

Canada led the way in the fight against apartheid in a nation thousands of miles away on a distant continent, but for too long we have led in the wrong direction when it comes to Cuba.

Why does our government hypocritically pick and choose which oppressed peoples we will stick up for and which we will not? Canada needs to do more to speak out against the violations of the freedoms of the people of Cuba.

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### MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS

**Ms. Beth Phinney (Hamilton Mountain, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate the citizens of Hamilton for raising \$220,000 for the Multiple Sclerosis Society last weekend.

Last Saturday morning more than 1,300 people gathered at St. Thomas More High School in Hamilton and Salt Fleet High School in Stoney Creek for the 11th annual Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada super cities walk.

Multiple sclerosis is a disease which attacks the central nervous system, causing inflammation and destruction of the protective covering around the spinal cord and brain. Canada has one of the highest rates of MS in the world with one out of every 500 Canadians suffering from the disease. Every day three more people in Canada are diagnosed with MS.

We do not yet know what causes this unpredictable disease. The money raised this weekend by Hamiltonians as well as other Canadians in 140 communities across the country taking part in the super cities walk will go to research and support services for MS sufferers and their families.

I wish to thank all the participants of the walk for their contributions and help.

*S. O. 31*

### CITIZENSHIP

**Mr. Stan Keyes (Hamilton West, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, 127 individuals from 38 countries recently attended a citizenship ceremony in my home town of Hamilton. Each of these individuals, representing all points of the globe, swore an oath committing themselves to Canada and sang the national anthem for the first time as Canadian citizens.

This ceremony is one of thousands that takes place each year across our great country. Indeed, last year more than 2,000 ceremonies were held, which welcomed 167,000 newcomers to our shores. The importance of these events must never be taken for granted. For new Canadians the citizenship ceremony marks the fulfillment of dreams that are often many years in the making.

Anyone who has ever attended a citizenship ceremony will tell us what a moving experience it is. It moves us because it reminds us of how very lucky we are as Canadians to live in a country whose values, ethics and principles of multicultural co-operation are admired the world over.

By warmly welcoming new citizens into our Canadian family, we further assist them with their integration into our society so that they can have the earliest opportunity to contribute fully to our collective life.

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### VAISAKHI

**Mr. Sarkis Assadourian (Brampton Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House today to join with Sikhs in Canada and throughout the world in marking the 303rd anniversary of Khalsa.

This past weekend I joined with over 25,000 Canadian Sikhs in a wonderful celebration of faith and pride in their culture. From its origins in the Indus Valley the Sikh faith has spread throughout the world, including Canada, where the first pioneers settled over 100 years ago.

Today Sikhs are represented in every occupation and facet of Canadian life, including being elected as members of the House of Commons, provincial parliaments and municipal governments.

I wish to congratulate the Canadian Sikh community on the 303rd anniversary of Khalsa and those in my own riding of Brampton Centre.

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### GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURES

**Mr. James Rajotte (Edmonton Southwest, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, the Canadian Alliance believes in encouraging business to business competition, rather than government interference in the marketplace. We also believe in disclosing how taxpayers' dollars are being spent.

Two disturbing stories have appeared recently regarding Industry Canada and subsidies to business. Industry Canada approved \$99.6 million in spending on March 12, 2001, for Pratt & Whitney. However, Industry Canada blocked the disclosure of further information about the investment that was sought through a follow up access request. I would remind the House that Pratt & Whitney is a company whose sales increased in 2001 to \$2.6 billion.

General Motors of Canada has suggested it receive more government money for R and D. Yet GM Canada is the second largest corporation in Canada and recently revved up production at 12 plants to meet increasing demand. Clearly, the new Minister of Industry has some work to do to ensure he is not squandering hard earned tax dollars.

It is about time the government reversed its industrial policy of giving handouts to multi-million dollar corporations and embraced the Canadian Alliance vision of decreasing the tax burden on all Canadians.

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• (1410)

### HEALTH

**Hon. Andy Scott (Fredericton, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to acknowledge the Romanow commission's hearings in Fredericton last Friday. Mr. Romanow's visit followed a people's forum, which I held in Fredericton on March 24, the findings of which were submitted to the commission.

I am extremely proud of the quality of the debate around health care that took place in Fredericton. Nearly 100 people gave up a Sunday afternoon because they care about the future of health in Canada. They emphasized wellness; primary health care; more federal funding, but with strings attached; and an end to federal-provincial finger pointing.

They advanced the need for a third party arbitrator of federal-provincial agreements, and a greater federal role in human resource issues. They clearly distanced themselves from a privatized American system as being inconsistent with the values underlying medicare.

I wish to thank co-chairs Russ King, Linda Silas and to all the participants for sharing their time and talent in this important debate.

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[Translation]

### ORGAN DONOR AWARENESS WEEK

**Mr. Réal Ménard (Hochelaga—Maisonnette, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, April 21 to 27 is National Organ Donor Awareness Week. We all know that we can save a life by being a donor. The majority of Quebecers are very much aware of this. According to the results of a survey carried out last week, 75% of them totally supported organ and tissue donation, and felt it was important for health professionals to provide them with information on this.

Only 53% of them, however, reported that they had taken the necessary steps to donate their organs and had notified their next of kin. As a result, we can see that more public awareness of this act of incomparable altruism is necessary.

Anyone, regardless of age, is a potential donor. If you have not done so, sign a donor card and tell your family and friends that you have done so.

Organ donation is a simple gesture but one that can save lives. Let us give some thought to it.

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#### RESIDENTS OF THE RIDING OF ROSEMONT—PETITE-PATRIE

**Ms. Diane St-Jacques (Shefford, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to inform the House of the generous contributions made by the residents of Rosemont—Petite-Patrie to the fundraising campaign organized by the parish of Saint-Ambroise to renovate the interior of their church.

This church is used as a gathering place for a great many residents, for both religious and social purposes. The church has been able to preserve a part of its history and charm thanks to the donations that were collected.

Renovations, which were begun in January, have restored the floor and the choir of the church which dates back to 1925 and is the work of the famous architect Ernest Cormier.

Once again, I congratulate the residents of Rosemont—Petite-Patrie for their generosity and their involvement in the community.

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[English]

#### GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURES

**Mr. Ted White (North Vancouver, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, over the past seven years the Liberal government's technology partnerships program has doled out \$947 million to the who's who of corporate welfare bums across Canada.

That is almost a billion dollars of hard earned taxpayers' money. Despite the assurances of successive ministers of industry less than \$25 million, that is less than 3%, of those so-called loans have ever been paid back.

Why has Bombardier, an enormous multi-billion dollar company, not repaid the \$87 million it received? Why has Ballard Power Systems not repaid the \$30 million it received? Why has CAE Electronics not repaid the \$32 million it received? And why were so many of these handouts given just before the 1997 election? Too many unanswered questions and not enough answers from dozens of corporate welfare bums for the handouts of public money.

It is time to stop these handouts and return the money to taxpayers in the form of tax reductions and smaller government.

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#### INTERNATIONAL NOISE AWARENESS DAY

**Mr. Clifford Lincoln (Lac-Saint-Louis, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, today is International Noise Awareness Day. The World Health Organization calls noise induced hearing loss the number one hidden disability in North America.

According to the Canadian Hearing Society more than seven million Canadians suffer from hearing loss, approximately a third of

*S. O. 31*

whom are affected by noise induced hearing loss. It is not just in the workplace. Hearing loss today targets an ever younger population from children to young adults whether it be through toys, movies, electronic equipment or others.

The real tragedy is that noise induced hearing loss is 100% preventable. Prevention of hearing loss is considerably cheaper than the economic and social toll of suffering hearing loss. Hearing loss takes a huge toll, not only on lives and families but on productivity in the workplace.

Next month is hearing awareness month. Let us create awareness of this terrible but preventable disability because silence on this issue is not acceptable.

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● (1415)

#### ARMENIA

**Ms. Alexa McDonough (Halifax, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, today marks the 87th anniversary of the genocide of 1.5 million Armenians. The tragedy does not end there.

To this day Turkey persists in its refusal to acknowledge this grotesque inhumanity. To our collective shame our own Liberal government still refuses to officially acknowledge that the Armenian genocide ever took place.

When the Deputy Prime Minister was pressed yesterday for an official acknowledgment in the House he stated the Minister of Foreign Affairs made a full and complete statement in the House of Commons regarding the issue. However, the Minister of Foreign Affairs actually said:

We still urge that we should consider these tragic events in their historical context and remember that we must move forward and try to ensure peace and harmony among all people.

That is the government's idea of a full and complete statement on the genocide that remains a raw wound for Canadian Armenians. It is an insult to the Armenian people, here at home and around the world. They deserve better from their government. Genocide is genocide in any context.

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[Translation]

#### ARMENIA

**Mr. Antoine Dubé (Lévis-et-Chutes-de-la-Chaudière, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, today, April 24, the international community is commemorating the Armenian genocide of 1915, which resulted in the death of one and a half million people.

In France, the National Assembly, the Senate and President Chirac recognized the genocide of 1915. France even passed legislation stating that just as we cannot deny the Holocaust, nor can we deny the Armenian genocide. Any person who denies it may be accused of distorting history.

In North America, Quebec's National Assembly, the Ontario legislature, and the states of California, Delaware, Massachusetts and New York have all recognized the Armenian genocide.

*Oral Questions*

The Government of Canada has had numerous opportunities to do so in the past, but has never officially recognized the Armenian genocide. It is the hope of the Bloc Québécois that the House of Commons and the government will finally have the courage to recognize the Armenian genocide of 1915.

Let us stand in solidarity—

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

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[English]

**TAIWAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**

**Ms. Sophia Leung (Vancouver Kingsway, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, recently I had the pleasure to attend the 10th anniversary gala of the Taiwan Chamber of Commerce of British Columbia, TCCBC. This organization was established in 1992 to promote business opportunities in Canada for Taiwanese and Canadian investors.

The Taiwan Chamber of Commerce has promoted many business and investment programs and activities for British Columbia and it continues to strengthen Canadian-Taiwanese business relations.

I wish to congratulate Mr. Jacob Lai and his members of the TCCBC for their contribution to B.C. I ask all members to join me in congratulating the hard work of the TCCBC for furthering Canada-Taiwan business relations.

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**FIREFIGHTERS**

**Mr. Peter MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough, PC):** Mr. Speaker, the government is redrafting public security legislation. I urge it to take a closer look at the initiatives brought forth by the International Association of Fire Fighters.

A \$500,000 annual investment, a fraction of the cost of the Prime Minister's luxury jets, gives firefighters access to hazardous material training. While military reaction to disaster is often hours or days away, firefighters are on the scene within minutes. Training is necessary for their protection and ours.

Liberal cuts to ports policing, the coast guard and the military put safety and security of Canadians at risk. The events of September 11 and the ill-advised changes to airport policy have created new dangers. The real threat of bioterrorism, delays in response time and inability to board planes could cost lives. Firefighters, professionals and volunteers need the support of the federal government in the area of pensions and compensation for spouses and children.

On these and other important issues the Liberals pay lip service. What firefighters need to do their job is action and resources. The lives of our firefighters and those who they selflessly serve and protect deserve no less.

**ORAL QUESTION PERIOD**

• (1420)

[English]

**NATIONAL DEFENCE**

**Mr. John Reynolds (Leader of the Opposition, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, the government took less care spending \$750 million on four subs than people do when they buy used cars. When people buy houses, they hire a house inspector. When people buy boats or submarines, they hire marine surveyors.

Could the minister explain to Canadians if he hired a professional, independent marine surveyor to ensure that taxpayers were getting subs that worked?

**Hon. Art Eggleton (Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, there were numerous inspections, tests and test trials before the subs were handed over. The matter of this minor dent is being fully examined at the moment and all precautions are being taken.

I must say though, for the price the hon. member noted, we got a great bargain. It was 25% of the cost of what it would have been to build new submarines. It takes a while getting them into service and ensuring all these matters are resolved. That is being done.

**Mr. John Reynolds (Leader of the Opposition, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, that is all good and nice but it does not answer the question. Even the Minister of Finance knows that when someone buys a boat, the person gets someone else to check it out. Canadians are always wondering if the minister is minding the store.

I ask him this again. Could the minister tell taxpayers what due diligence was applied to this deal and was an independent marine surveyor hired by the Canadian government to ensure that these subs were seaworthy and safe for our services?

**Hon. Art Eggleton (Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have already said an all due inspection was made and due diligence was carried out to ensure that these were ready. The submarines were brought over to Canada. Further work was being done on them and in the course of the work this dent was discovered.

**Mr. John Reynolds (Leader of the Opposition, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, we still do not have an answer whether there was an independent surveyor, which should have been done.

The minister has failed to replace the Sea Kings. A billion dollars wasted and not a helicopter has been ordered yet. The clothe the soldier program is far over budget and delayed by three years. A \$174 million went into a satellite system that is still in storage. We have a destroyer sitting in mothballs in British Columbia only a few years after it received a multimillion dollar refit. The list goes on and on.

*Oral Questions*

Now we have submarines that have a problem and he cannot tell us whether there was an independent survey. When will the minister admit that he does not have control of his department?

**Hon. Art Eggleton (Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** That is absolute nonsense, Mr. Speaker. What the hon. member and his party do not point out is the fact that the government has invested some 20% increase in the budget of the defence department. It has bought new armoured personnel carriers and new Coyotes. We have in fact invested a great deal to support the Canadian forces over these years, and that is what we are doing.

**Mr. Leon Benoit (Lakeland, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, that is nonsense. The facts are that the government spends less on the military than it did when it took over government nine years ago.

The whole submarine fiasco points to a larger flaw in Canada's approach to replacing military ships. We know that if the government had not purchased these used submarines we would not have had any subs. That is because it has done nothing to plan for an ongoing shipbuilding industry.

When will the government finally draft a policy to replace our naval ships which will certainly lead to a Canadian shipbuilding industry?

**Hon. Art Eggleton (Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we have an excellent group of ships. We have the frigates and the coastal defence vessels. These submarines had seen only one or two years' service and were really quite new when they were mothballed by the U.K. We purchased them for a quarter of the price it would have cost to buy new submarines. When all of the work is done to get them ready, they will serve this country well.

**Mr. Leon Benoit (Lakeland, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, if the government had not waited four years to buy these things, they never would have been mothballed. It is a complete double standard on the part of the government. It is made in Canada luxury jets for the cabinet and second-hand subs for our military. Why is that?

Canada is supposedly a modern G-8 country. We have the longest coastline in the world and we have a proud naval history. How is it that countries like Australia, Sweden and the Netherlands all build their own subs but Canada does not?

**Hon. Art Eggleton (Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is interesting that the hon. member mentions Australia, which did decide to build its own class of submarine but it took 15 years to get it into service.

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•(1425)

[Translation]

**MICROBREWERIES**

**Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, in order to help small businesses that create jobs, France, Belgium, Germany, England and the United States all impose a lower excise tax rate on beer produced by their microbreweries than on bottled beer produced in large quantities by major beer breweries.

How does the Prime Minister explain that, contrary to their foreign competitors, Quebec and Canadian microbreweries do not

enjoy a preferential rate to help them on a domestic market that is dominated by large breweries?

**Hon. John McCallum (Secretary of State (International Financial Institutions), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the bill that is currently before the committee has nothing to do with this issue.

However, the Minister of Finance is continuing his discussions with microbreweries, and we will soon have an answer.

**Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, we got the answer yesterday. The excise tax review under Bill C-47 includes wine, spirits and tobacco, but not beer. Indeed, the government has decided that Quebec and Canadian brewers, large and small, will continue to pay an excise tax of 28 cents on each litre of beer.

Could the Prime Minister explain to us the twisted logic whereby beer is the only product that is excluded from the excise tax review?

**Hon. John McCallum (Secretary of State (International Financial Institutions), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I can only repeat what I just said.

We are having in-depth discussions with the industry. We will announce the outcome of these discussions as soon as the government is ready.

**Ms. Pauline Picard (Drummond, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, since 1997, 38 of the 86 microbreweries in Quebec and Canada have disappeared. The government's taxation policies are in part responsible for this situation, because domestic microbreweries have to pay 28 cents a litre in excise tax, while their American and European competitors pay only 9 cents.

How can the government use its fiscal policy to subject the microbreweries of Quebec and Canada to such prejudicial treatment?

**Hon. John McCallum (Secretary of State (International Financial Institutions), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I do not know why the Bloc Quebecois has asked the same question three times now. All I can do is keep on giving the same answer.

We are holding discussions with the industry, and the government will do what the government will do.

**Ms. Pauline Picard (Drummond, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, what interests is the government pursuing by maintaining fiscal policies that are causing microbreweries to close down one after the other and putting the survivors in a perilous situation?

Are we to consider the present fiscal policies a form of collusion between the government and the major breweries in order to enable them to maintain their dominant market position in Canada?

**Hon. John McCallum (Secretary of State (International Financial Institutions), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Bloc Quebecois' last statement is utterly ridiculous, and it is not necessary to answer the same question four times.

*Oral Questions*

[English]

**MIDDLE EAST**

**Ms. Alexa McDonough (Halifax, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, last Friday the UN security council voted to send a fact finding mission to investigate the horrors of what happened in Jenin. The Sharon government initially pledged to co-operate with the mission but yesterday did an about-face.

Egypt, the U.K. and even the U.S. have condemned Sharon's foot dragging. What action has the Canadian government taken to press the Israeli government to allow the UN peace mission to proceed?

**Hon. Bill Graham (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Mr. Annan is pressing the sending of his mission. We support Mr. Annan and the United Nations in this. I understand negotiations are going on today in New York between the Israeli government and the United Nations.

We pressed the Israeli government to accept a fact finding mission. I am confident that Mr. Annan will work out with the Israeli authorities the right composition of the mission so that the world will know what has taken place in Jenin.

**Ms. Alexa McDonough (Halifax, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, my question was not what Kofi Annan has done. It was what has the government done. Canada's whisper is so faint, so wimpy in the world today that I cannot even hear it over here, let alone Sharon getting the message.

Whatever happened to Canada, the proactive promoter of peace? Whatever happened to Canada, the confident internationalist? When did the government decide to just sit it out?

• (1430)

**Hon. Bill Graham (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I was confused about whispers. I was not too sure what member they were coming from, but I take it they were coming from the leader of the party who is representing her party on the Middle East.

I want to assure her that the government does speak in more than whispers. We speak forcefully on this issue and we continue to pursue, in all cases, those measures which will lead to a peaceful conclusion and the end of this conflict.

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**NATIONAL DEFENCE**

**Mrs. Elsie Wayne (Saint John, PC):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of National Defence. Yesterday it was stated and reported that one of the British submarines bought by the government had a dent in the hull. One military official stated that it was just by chance that they discovered this dent.

The minister today has said that these submarines were inspected before he paid \$700 million for them. Will he table in the House that full report on that inspection on these submarines?

**Hon. Art Eggleton (Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we will certainly table whatever information we can. The matter of the dent is being looked into. If it is something we inherited when the submarine was brought over from the U.K., then indeed a claim will be submitted and we will expect full reimbursement for any of the damage.

Let us bear in mind that these submarines are still a quarter of the price of what it costs to build new ones. They were only used one or two years. The U.K. has a solid reputation for excellent construction of its ships and submarines. I think we will get these repaired and will get the submarines into service.

**Mrs. Elsie Wayne (Saint John, PC):** Mr. Speaker, they might have cost a quarter of the price, but they cannot be used. They do not even float. Two of the four subs have been delivered thus far. One leaks and the other has a dent. The government has spent \$472 million upgrading these subs, yet none of them are expected to be operational until at least the year 2004.

How much more money does the Minister of National Defence expect to pay before all those subs are operational? What arrangement has been made with the British regarding the cost of these repairs? Will we get the money back that it is costing us?

**Hon. Art Eggleton (Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we are having some problems getting the submarines operational. There is no doubt about that. However, if any of these expenses relate back to the British guarantee to put them in operable condition, then of course we will make appropriate claims.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**FUNDRAISING**

**Mr. Grant Hill (MacLeod, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, today we learned that other questions have been raised about the Minister of Canadian Heritage and her fundraising. It is very similar to the Minister of Finance's problems.

Will the Prime Minister promise today to set guidelines for ministerial fundraising and to make them public immediately?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have answered this question several times. I said that we would have public guidelines, we hope, before the end of May.

[English]

**Mr. Grant Hill (MacLeod, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, the heritage minister in this campaign has doled out big taxpayer bucks to an organizer in Toronto. Now we find out that he is organizing her phantom leadership contest.

My question is straightforward. Will these guidelines ban the sort of practice that looks like a conflict of interest to every single Canadian? Yes or no.

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is all right to make accusations but he collected money a few weeks ago for his own campaign. He has not revealed all the people and the amount of money he received. That is the case of many on the other side.

I said we will have guidelines, but in this case it was for a voluntary organization. That person is a volunteer who has no personal interest in the contribution that is important for this group in Toronto.



*Oral Questions*

**The Speaker:** I ask hon. members to have pity on the Speaker. I have to hear what hon. members say. When everyone is carrying on conversations across the floor while someone is speaking, I cannot hear, in spite of speakers behind me that blast the sound into my ears.

[*Translation*]

I need the co-operation of all hon. members.

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•(1435)

**MICROBREWERIES**

**Mr. Yvan Loubier (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the powerful Standing Committee on Finance, chaired by the member for London West, has rejected the opposition amendments concerning microbreweries. We now know that this member is in a conflict of interest situation because her husband is one of the seven directors of the John Labatt Company.

How can the Prime Minister and the government allow the member for London West to stay on as chair, accept the biased recommendations of the Standing Committee on Finance, and stand by and watch while the microbrewery industry, which has already lost 38 of the 86 companies working in this sector, dies?

[*English*]

**Hon. Ralph Goodale (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this is a scurrilous personal attack against the chairman of the finance committee who is a distinguished lawyer, a longstanding member of the House and an experienced parliamentarian as a committee chair and as a parliamentary secretary. She was prudent enough in this matter to seek legal advice from the law officers of the House in advance of the committee hearing and they have ruled conclusively there is no conflict of interest.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Yvan Loubier (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, she kept that advice to herself until the process was over without telling a soul.

Now that we know that the husband of the finance committee chair is not only one of the seven directors of the John Labatt Company, but that he also chairs the taxation committee of the Brewers Association of Canada, that he is the one who conspired with his wife and the Minister of Finance to exclude beer from Bill C-47, what does the government intend to do to correct this deplorable situation, support the microbreweries and end the scheming between the large breweries, the Minister of Finance and the member for London West?

[*English*]

**Hon. Ralph Goodale (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as the law officers of the House pointed out, Bill C-47 does not in any way deal with the beer industry. Accordingly, there is no possible conflict of interest between the chair of the committee and the beer industry.

As the secretary of state has pointed out, the matter of the excise taxes in relation to beer is being considered in an entirely different forum in which, in fact, the chair of the finance committee is not involved.

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**LEADERSHIP CAMPAIGNS**

**Mr. Randy White (Langley—Abbotsford, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, the important difference between someone in opposition or a Liberal backbencher running for leadership and a minister running for leadership is that they do not have access to public funds like the minister has. If we have to explain that to the government the country has a big problem.

The Toronto fundraiser for the minister of heritage has publicly said he is trying to raise \$7 million for her leadership bid. At the same time, this individual has received over \$1 million for the organization from Heritage Canada. I want to know from the minister of heritage how she is going to break the ties between her department—

**The Speaker:** The right hon. Prime Minister.

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, that accusation is not factual. No wonder people do not believe in the integrity of the members of parliament. Again I want to repeat that this is a volunteer who is working for a volunteer organization, who is trying to do something good for the citizens of Toronto. To make a link like that, making accusations, I can understand that with that type of mentality they will have no problem with future conflicts of interest because they will never be on this side.

**Mr. Randy White (Langley—Abbotsford, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I will tell you about mentality. Seventy per cent of Canadians think the government is corrupt and I happen to think that too.

The minister gives this guy's group \$1 million and he says he is going to raise \$7 million for the minister of heritage. That is a great return on investment. The problem is, it is taxpayers' money. What I want to know is how she is going to break the ties between her department and her leadership bid because that is public money she is giving away.

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, they always use the word corruption, about anything. They should have the guts to make an accusation and prove that the minister has a conflict of interest.

What they do is just throw mud which hurts all members of parliament. Perhaps the hon. member should read the statement made by the leader of the Bloc Québécois, who said that type of frivolous accusation reflects on all members of parliament, including those who do it.

\* \* \*

•(1440)

[*Translation*]

**MICROBREWERIES**

**Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister—

*Oral Questions*

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

**The Speaker:** Order, please. We want to hear the hon. member for Roberval.

**Mr. Michel Gauthier:** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister. Here is the situation.

On the advice of the chair of the taxation committee of the Brewers Association of Canada, who happens to be her husband, the chair of the Standing Committee on Finance is recommending to the Minister of Finance, in whose riding the John Labatt company is located, not to lower the tax imposed on microbreweries.

Will the Prime Minister admit that his government is in a tight spot and that microbreweries have very little chance of being treated fairly in such a context?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons clearly indicated that this issue is not included in the bill.

Also, the hon. member involved met with House of Commons lawyers to get an opinion on her status regarding this matter. Moreover, it is not just the hon. member's report, but the report of all the committee members.

Why target an hon. member when the recommendation was made by all the members of the committee? Why tarnish someone's reputation with unfounded accusations?

**Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister is going way too far when he says that our accusations are unfounded. The husband of the committee chair is himself the chair of the brewers' taxation committee. He lobbies for brewers. She listens to him, she follows his instructions and she refuses to include microbreweries in the bill.

And the Prime Minister has the nerve to say that this is an unfounded accusation. Generally speaking, husbands and wives do get along, and the hon. member showed us that she gets along very well with her brewer husband.

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

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thought we were no longer living in the 19th century. I think that a woman can serve parliament, while her husband can earn a living honestly outside parliament.

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

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien:** Mr. Speaker, I know that the hon. member already regrets what he said.

**An hon. member:** Talk about patronage.

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

\* \* \*

[English]

**GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURES**

**Mr. Charlie Penson (Peace River, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, Canadian businesses are concerned about the unchecked Liberal spending. Yesterday at the first prebudget hearing—

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

[Translation]

**The Speaker:** Order, please. It is impossible to hear the hon. member. We are wasting time and there will not be enough time for the other questions if the noise does not stop. Order, please.

[English]

The hon. member for Peace River has the floor. We will want to hear the hon. member.

**Mr. Charlie Penson:** Mr. Speaker, Canadian business groups are concerned about the unchecked Liberal spending. Yesterday at the first prebudget hearing they reminded the finance committee that spending on government programs grew by more than 24% since 1997.

The Minister of Finance has said that government spending should be kept in line with inflation and population growth. That is a great concept, but what happened to the minister's promise? Where is it?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the member picks one year. He should look at when we started. We were spending \$121 billion. Eight years after that we were back at the level we were when we started. It is the way that we have managed here on this side as the government to balance the books and have surpluses.

**Mr. Charlie Penson (Peace River, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, if we recall, I think the debt is about \$36 billion more than when they started in 1993.

Canadian business representatives call for elimination of the capital tax, an accelerated capital cost allowance and a reduction in corporate tax rates to 17%; I would remind you, Mr. Speaker, 17%.

When is the Minister of Finance going to develop sound fiscal policy that will give our Canadian business community a competitive tax advantage for a change?

● (1445)

**Hon. John McCallum (Secretary of State (International Financial Institutions), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, business wants lower taxes, lower debt and controlled spending. Right. What has the government done? A \$100 billion tax cut, the biggest in Canadian history. What has the government done? A \$35 billion debt reduction over the last three years. On spending, what has the government done? We have the lowest spending relative to the size of our economy in my lifetime. What more does the hon. member want?

\* \* \*

**CHILD PROTECTION**

**Ms. Paddy Torsney (Burlington, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, over the last month the issues relating to child pornography and the protection of children have been on the minds of most Canadians and certainly of all parliamentarians.

The government has made the protection of children one of its top priorities, as the Minister of Justice has reinforced in the House and in the media.

*Oral Questions*

In light of this commitment to our children and their protection, would the Minister of Justice please tell the House why he and the government opposed yesterday's Canadian Alliance supply day motion?

**Hon. Martin Cauchon (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the hon. member for this very good question, indeed an important question. Indeed, for the government the protection of our children is a top priority, as well as for the members of parliament on this side of the House of course. We have been working on that. As a good example of what we have been doing, Bill C-15A creates more offences.

Of course we could not agree with the timing aspect of the motion yesterday because it is a complex issue. We need to proceed with more consultation. Indeed, we agree with what was said yesterday by the leader of the Canadian Alliance, that we need consultation. We are going to do it.

\* \* \*

**HEALTH CARE**

**Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis (Winnipeg North Centre, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, British Columbians are reeling today at an unprecedented attack on public health care by provincial Liberals. They are watching massive layoffs and service cuts. They are agonizing over how to care for elderly relatives. They are watching hospitals close, maybe even turn into hotels for wealthy Americans, with not a peep from Canada's health minister. They are watching in vain for some defence from her in favour of Canada's public health care system.

Will the minister who sat silent while Ralph Klein moved our Alberta system to two tier health care now act today? Will she at least signal the Campbell wrecking crew that the federal government will—

**The Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Health.

**Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as we are well aware, the provinces and territories are primarily responsible for the delivery of health care in this country. Let me remind the hon. member that in fact it was this government and this Prime Minister which ensured that an additional \$21.1 billion was transferred to the provinces and territories so that they could run accessible, high quality health care systems.

Let me reassure the hon. member that in fact we will monitor that which is happening in the province of British Columbia. If it appears that anything it is doing in its restructuring process violates the five principles of the Canada Health Act, we will—

**Ms. Libby Davies (Vancouver East, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I have to say to the Minister of Health that nobody buys her lame excuses any more because the writing is clearly on the wall. I do not know whether she is in denial or she is ignorant about what is going on, but it is clear that the gutting of our public health care system is underway. Privatization is going to come in, with user fees to boot.

I want to ask the health minister again, is she going to hold the provinces accountable or will she continue to give cash to Campbell for closing hospitals and destroying our health care system? Who is going to stand up for this medicare system and where is the Minister of Health on that question?

**Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we have made it absolutely plain that we understand that Canadians want a publicly financed, high quality, accessible health care system. That goal, I believe, is shared by provincial governments and territorial governments in this country, but I have made it absolutely plain that if in restructuring in any province or territory in the country it appears that there is a violation of one of the principles of the Canada Health Act, I will enforce that act against that province.

\* \* \*

**NATIONAL DEFENCE**

**Right Hon. Joe Clark (Calgary Centre, PC):** Mr. Speaker, the minister of defence admits that he has a little problem with his bargain basement submarines. One of them leaks and the other has a dent which might make its hull collapse if it goes to maximum depth.

Before Canada spent \$750 million on these used submarines, was the logbook of each vessel examined to determine if there had been accidents and will the minister table in the House each of those logbooks?

• (1450)

**Hon. Art Eggleton (Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as I said earlier, all of these matters are being examined at the moment so that we can determine what happened and when it happened, but I can assure the hon. member that these problems will be fixed. They should not be exaggerated. These problems will be fixed. If they relate to the condition in which we received those submarines from the U.K., then we will put in the appropriate claims.

\* \* \*

**FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

**Right Hon. Joe Clark (Calgary Centre, PC):** Mr. Speaker, either the minister does not know or he forgot.

I have a question for the foreign minister. I know the foreign minister takes the international reputation of Canada very seriously and he would be concerned that Alfonso Gagliano is a continuing embarrassment to this country. Mr. Gagliano is now writing letters to Danish newspapers saying that he has never been the subject of any investigation. At best that is a half truth since the auditor general is investigating three of the contracts issued suspiciously under his watch.

Did the foreign minister approve his ambassador's letter?

**Hon. Bill Graham (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Mr. Gagliano is serving his country as ambassador today as he served in the House honourably for many years on the front benches of this government and was responsible for many of the policies which have given good government to this country and which have provided many benefits for our citizens. I am confident that he will do a wonderful job for us in his post in Copenhagen.

*Oral Questions***CHILD PROTECTION**

**Mr. Vic Toews (Provencher, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday was a great day for the Canadian horse but Canadian children were not so fortunate. This Liberal government voted unanimously to give Canada a national horse but voted against two motions to protect our children against sexual abuse.

Why does this Liberal government continue to put the interests of sexual predators, and now horses, above the interests of children?

**Hon. Martin Cauchon (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, that member of parliament should be ashamed for asking such a question in the House. We said yesterday that all they wanted was to score cheap political points with a very serious issue. That is a good example.

The members of parliament on this side of the House will keep making sure that we will protect our children in this country and will keep making sure we work against child pornography.

As we said yesterday, this is a complex issue and we need consultation. As far as I am concerned, the leader of the Canadian Alliance has said the same thing.

**Mr. Vic Toews (Provencher, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, the Liberals have been talking and consulting for nine years and still nothing has been done. Their repeated promises on the sex offender registry has led to nothing.

Yesterday even the Prime Minister tried to stand up and blow smoke into the eyes of Canadians on this issue. What has happened? Nothing has happened.

Why will the Prime Minister not stop embarrassing himself and Canadians and take action to protect children?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as the Minister of Justice said a minute ago, the people who are putting shame on themselves are the opposition members by using an extremely difficult issue. They distort the situation in order to try to score cheap political points. The reason they have no credibility is that the people know the kind of people they are.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**THE ENVIRONMENT**

**Mr. Mario Laframboise (Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the people in the beaches area of Sept-Îles can no longer drink their water because the Department of Transport has polluted the underground water table. Yesterday, the minister told the member for Manicouagan that he had got it wrong. But the Department of Transport admitted its responsibility in this affair.

So what is the Minister of Transport waiting for to compensate the town of Sept-Îles and find a lasting solution, as the town is requesting? After all, it is his responsibility.

**Hon. David Collenette (Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as I have already explained, we worked with the city of Sept-Îles to find a solution.

I have been told that there are only two households with this problem. We will continue to look for a solution for all the residents of Sept-Îles.

• (1455)

**Mr. Mario Laframboise (Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, having deprived the residents of drinking water, the minister is reimbursing the cost of buying bottled water. The city of Sept-Îles has said that this cannot be considered a permanent solution. The minister's position is quite simply shocking.

Why could the people of Sept-Îles not be treated fairly by this government?

**Hon. David Collenette (Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we are paying for bottled water until we find a permanent solution. This is obvious.

\* \* \*

[English]

**CHILD PROTECTION**

**Mr. Larry Spencer (Regina—Lumsden—Lake Centre, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, with priorities like that thank goodness the Prime Minister is not running again.

Yesterday the government, by voting not once but twice against our attempts to protect children from sexual predators, proved to Canadians that it was more concerned with the protection of pedophiles and pornographers than with the protection of children. This is shameful.

Could the Minister of Justice explain why the government places the protection of pedophiles and pornographers ahead of protecting children?

**Hon. Martin Cauchon (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday we essentially voted in order to make sure that when the government moves ahead to modify or add offences to the existing legislation that they will be declared valid by the Supreme Court of Canada if we have to go there.

We do of course need more consultation but we also need to take our time. In other words, we need to move ahead with a thorough consultation with the population and the stakeholders. That was exactly what was said yesterday and that is what we voted for.

**Mr. Larry Spencer (Regina—Lumsden—Lake Centre, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, moments ago and again just now, before he tried to score his cheap political points, the minister acknowledged that our leader acknowledged the need for consultation in regard to revising Canada's age of consent laws.

The Prime Minister agreed with our leader's assertion. Our amended motion even included this.

If the government agrees with our leader and agrees with the spirit of yesterday's motion, what will the Prime Minister do to get the process moving beyond consultation? We need real action, not just—

**The Speaker:** The hon. government House leader.

*Oral Questions*

**Hon. Ralph Goodale (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would advise the hon. member, as he well knows, that yesterday, during the discussions with respect to the motion before the House, we offered an amendment that in fact embodied the words of his leader word for word as expressed yesterday in the *National Post*, and it was turned down.

\* \* \*

**VOLUNTEER AWARD**

**Mr. John Maloney (Erie—Lincoln, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as the House knows, this is National Volunteer Week. Last year, during the International Year of the Volunteer, the Minister of Human Resources Development launched the Thérèse Casgrain Volunteer Award to recognize the valuable work of Canadian volunteers.

Could the minister inform the House on the status of this award and who the recipients are this year?

**Hon. Jane Stewart (Minister of Human Resources Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to pay tribute to two of Canada's 6.5 million volunteers. Thanks to Patricia Anzovino's efforts at Casa el Norte, a transition home for refugees fleeing persecution in their homeland, over 10,000 refugees have received food and shelter.

Samuel Bowman's efforts, as co-founder of Pathways, have ensured that thousands of Canada's children, youth and families have benefited from prenatal and postnatal nutrition programs, homeless drop-in centres and childcare services.

Our thanks go out to them for a lifetime of commitment as volunteers.

\* \* \*

**ATLANTIC CANADA OPPORTUNITIES AGENCY**

**Mr. John Williams (St. Albert, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday I accused ACOA of having an ethical deficit because its own staff set up a non-profit organization to apply to ACOA for a loan. Of course it was approved because the people who stamped it approved were the people who applied for the loan in the first place.

The money went to build an interpretive centre in the riding of the solicitor general.

Does the solicitor general think that an ethical deficit, which means breaking every rule in the book, is necessary to get money in his riding?

● (1500)

**Hon. Gerry Byrne (Minister of State (Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, if those categorizations were ever true there should be a surplus of questions being faced by the minister responsible for ACOA.

This is the first opportunity I have had to stand on my feet and answer a question in the House since January 16 and I am very pleased to do so.

With respect to the question at hand, I would like to point out to the hon. member that the project in question was put forward as a priority by the provincial government and the community. As the hon. member acknowledged, the project had a very substantial, productive benefit to the area.

**Mr. John Williams (St. Albert, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, the facts are true. They were acknowledged by the president of ACOA yesterday and the Auditor General of Canada.

Ethical deficits and Liberal Party contributors seem to go hand in hand in this country. Perhaps that is why 69% of Canadians believe the government to be corrupt.

The president of APM Inc. just happens to be the president of the Liberal Party in Prince Edward Island. His company, which had the contract to build the interpretive centre, donated \$1,000 to the solicitor general's election campaign.

My question is for the solicitor general. Was this a payback, a kickback or just a thank you for the contract?

**The Speaker:** I doubt whether this question is in order but the hon. minister of state may answer.

**Hon. Gerry Byrne (Minister of State (Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, what was also pointed out on several occasions was that the project had a very substantial and positive impact on the community. It was supported by the province of Prince Edward Island. It was supported by the community.

I would simply ask the hon. member to listen to his own words for one moment. He said that no one was questioning the fact that this was a viable and valuable project. In fact the hon. member for St. Albert acknowledged that he was "not worried about where the money ended up because I think in the end it was not a bad deal".

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**UNITED NATIONS**

**Mr. Pierre Paquette (Joliette, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, last Friday, Shimon Peres agreed to allow a UN fact-finding mission into Israel to shed light on the military intervention in the Jenin refugee camp. Yesterday, we learned that the Israeli government had changed its mind and now wants to delay the arrival of the UN investigators.

Will Canada add its voice to that of the UN secretary general and issue a clear statement to Israeli authorities that it feels that the arrival of the UN fact-finding mission in Jenin is necessary and urgent?

**Hon. Bill Graham (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as I said in the House today, Canada supports the UN secretary general's efforts to get a fact-finding mission under way in Israel and in the Palestinian territories. We support these efforts and have clearly said so to the Israeli authorities, as well as the UN. We will continue to support these efforts and we are confident that Kofi Annan will have this investigation under way by the end of the week.

*Routine Proceedings*

[English]

**PRIVACY**

**Hon. Andy Scott (Fredericton, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Canadians value their privacy. Protection of their privacy as it relates to their dealings with government is of particular importance.

With the growing influence of the government's online initiative, what assurances could the President of Treasury Board give the House that the privacy of Canadians is being protected?

**Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to report that Canada has become the first national government in the world to make privacy assessment mandatory for departments and agencies. This policy will ensure that privacy protection is a core consideration in the initial framing of programs and services. All those assessments will have to be sent to the privacy commissioner for his advice.

This is a strong signal to Canadians that the Government of Canada is committed to protecting their personal information.

\* \* \*

**CORRECTIONAL SERVICE CANADA**

**Mr. Kevin Sorenson (Crowfoot, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, the solicitor general has evaded our questions regarding CorCan's incentive payments to prisoners.

As he continues to evade the question and appears so confident that this was an isolated case, will he commit to tabling in the House Correctional Service Canada's findings regarding how much money was paid and how many inmates received those payments? This is very simple. How many and how much?

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as I said before, what took place was inappropriate. My hon. colleague is fully aware that we will be appearing before the standing committee tomorrow. He is also fully aware that Correctional Service Canada has indicated that this will not happen again.

\* \* \*

● (1505)

[Translation]

**HOUSE OF COMMONS**

Member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca

**The Speaker:** Pursuant to order made Tuesday, April 23, 2002, Mr. Martin is ready to appear at the bar of the House.

[English]

Mr. Martin, I invite you to address the House pursuant to special order.

**Mr. Keith Martin:** Mr. Speaker, it is with regret that I find myself standing here before the House at the bar but it is understandable that I find myself here.

It was wrong for me to take the Mace, the symbol of the dignity and authority of the House, into my hands as a gesture of protest. I have reflected on my actions and have had the benefit of hearing my

colleagues speak eloquently about this place and about the respect that must be accorded to it.

I apologize to you, Mr. Speaker, and to all members of the House for my actions. I ask that you accept this apology in the spirit in which it is afforded.

**The Speaker:** I invite the hon. member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca to resume his seat.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE**

**The Speaker:** It is my duty, pursuant to Standing Order 81(14), to inform the House that the motion to be considered tomorrow during consideration of the business of supply is as follows:

That this House condemn the government for its inability to defend the workers at the General Motors plant in Boisbriand and thus allowing the vehicle assembly sector of the auto industry to disappear.

This motion, standing in the name of the hon. member for Laurentides, is not votable.

Copies of the motion are available at the table.

**ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS**

[English]

**GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS**

**Mrs. Karen Redman (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8) I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the government's response to six petitions.

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**COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE**

## FINANCE

**Mrs. Sue Barnes (London West, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present the 14th report of the Standing Committee on Finance regarding its order of reference of Tuesday, April 9 in relation to Bill C-47, an act respecting the taxation of spirits, wine and tobacco and the treatment of ships' stores.

The committee has considered Bill C-47 and reports the bill with amendment.

\* \* \*

● (1510)

**CANADA BUSINESS CORPORATIONS ACT**

**Mr. Pat Martin (Winnipeg Centre, NDP)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-448, an act to amend the Canada Business Corporations Act.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to introduce this private member's bill which seeks to amend the Canada Business Corporations Act to require the auditor to divulge to shareholders whether he or she is providing other, non-audit services to the same company.

This is an issue of increasing interest after the Enron scandal which was one of the factors in the collapse of Enron. We do not believe the auditor should provide non-audit services to the same company he or she is auditing. Bill C-448 would oblige the auditor to divulge in his or her annual report whether that was the practice.

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

\* \* \*

#### PUBLIC SAFETY ACT

(Bill C-42. On the Order: Government Orders:)

Second reading and reference to Standing Committee on Transport and Government Operations of Bill C-42, an act to amend certain acts of Canada, and to enact measures for implementing the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention, in order to enhance public safety

**Hon. Ralph Goodale (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, There have been some discussions among all the party House leaders, and I believe you would find unanimous consent to discharge the order for consideration of Bill C-42 and to withdraw this bill from the order paper.

**The Speaker:** Is there consent to proceed in the manner suggested by the government House leader?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

(Order discharged and bill withdrawn)

\* \* \*

[Translation]

#### PETITIONS

##### MIDDLE EAST

**Ms. Christiane Gagnon (Québec, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, it is with great emotion that I present a petition signed by 1,000 people from the Quebec City region, particularly from the riding of Québec.

The petitioners ask that observers be sent to Palestine. They describe the Israeli system of checkpoints in the occupied territories as apartheid. They believe that from now on there must be real negotiations and that the objectives must be clear, that Palestinians must be able to live with full dignity and that they must be given all that they require to develop.

[English]

##### GASOLINE ADDITIVES

**Mrs. Rose-Marie Ur (Lambton—Kent—Middlesex, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36 I rise to present a petition signed by constituents living in Grand Bend and Forest in the riding of Lambton—Kent—Middlesex. The petitioners call on parliament to protect the health of seniors and children and to save our environment by banning the additive MMT as it creates smog and enhances global warming.

##### FISHERIES

**Mr. John Cummins (Delta—South Richmond, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure today to present a petition from my constituents and others. They remind the federal Minister of

#### Routine Proceedings

Fisheries and Oceans that he has a constitutional obligation to protect wild fish and their habitat.

They call on the minister to put in place regulations which would protect wild fish and their habitat from the effects of salmon farming.

##### LABELLING

**Mr. Murray Calder (Dufferin—Peel—Wellington—Grey, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36 I have three petitions I will introduce in the House.

The first is on labelling.

##### EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

**Mr. Murray Calder (Dufferin—Peel—Wellington—Grey, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my second petition is an amendment to the Employment Insurance Act.

The petition calls for children under the age of 18 attending full time secondary school and working part time to be exempt from payroll deductions of employment insurance.

##### CENSUS INFORMATION

**Mr. Murray Calder (Dufferin—Peel—Wellington—Grey, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my third petition is the one of a continuing series of petitions I have been presenting to the House regarding the census.

The petitioners ask the government to release the 1911 census information. I have presented over 3,000 names in the House and over 14,000 names have been presented across the country.

##### CRIMINAL CODE

**Mr. Leon Benoit (Lakeland, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, Dana Fair is dead. He was beaten to death by three men with boards on September 1, 2001 in Lloydminster. There were several eyewitnesses to Dana's death. Three men, Raymond Cannepotatoe, David Harper and Cody Littlewolf, have been charged with second degree murder.

The undersigned petitioners call on parliament to ensure there is no bail for accused murderers caught in the act of committing their crimes and that only maximum sentences for those convicted be put in place.

● (1515)

##### TRANSPORTATION

**Mr. Joe Comartin (Windsor—St. Clair, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36 I rise to present a petition from the constituents of my riding in the city of Windsor and the county of Essex asking the federal government to be of assistance in establishing a regional public transit system. I estimate there are several hundred if not a thousand signatures on the petition.

##### ABORTION

**Mr. Randy White (Langley—Abbotsford, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present a petition to the House from my constituents which says that by making abortion illegal the government would restore human rights to unborn babies and protect living, growing fetuses from painful abortion procedures.

*Routine Proceedings*

The petitioners therefore ask that the citizens of Canada call on parliament to make abortion illegal in Canada unless the pregnancy endangers the life of the mother.

ACCOUNTING STANDARDS

**Mr. James Rajotte (Edmonton Southwest, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure today to present two petitions to the House.

The first petition is signed by practitioners in accountancy and taxation from across Canada. These citizens call on the federal government to formally recognize professional compilers who have met an agreed minimum standard. This would allow the public to distinguish qualified practitioners from those who have no proven competency in the profession of taxation.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

**Mr. James Rajotte (Edmonton Southwest, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, the second petition is signed by Canadians from Edmonton and the surrounding area. They call on parliament to pass legislation to provide for the taking of samples of blood for the benefit of good samaritans and persons who administer and enforce the law. The law would protect good samaritans, health professionals and security and emergency professionals.

ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS

**Mr. Pat Martin (Winnipeg Centre, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I am proud to rise today to present a petition which contains literally thousands of names of first nations citizens in the province of Manitoba. The petitioners reject the first nations governance initiative put forward by the minister of Indian affairs. They believe it to be nothing more than a thinly veiled guise to diminish or even put out their treaty rights.

The petitioners point out that the so-called consultative process has been a sham. They point out that they intend to submit more signatures of people who oppose the initiative than of people who were involved in the consultative process.

\* \* \*

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

**Mrs. Karen Redman (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the following questions will be answered today: Nos. 120, 123, 124, and 131.

[Text]

Question No. 120—**Mr. John Herron:**

Why is the definition of “disabled” used in the Canada pension plan disability benefit program not also used for applications for the disability tax credit with Canada Customs and Revenue Agency?

**Hon. Elinor Caplan (Minister of National Revenue, Lib.):** The fact that a person is unable to work due to medical reasons or is receiving Canada pension plan, CPP, benefits or payments from other types of disability or insurance plans does not necessarily mean the person qualifies for the disability tax credit, DTC.

The CPP disability program is intended to provide benefits to individuals who are no longer able to work because of a “disability”. Criteria for the DTC, however, do not consider an individual’s ability

to work. The issue is whether an individual is affected in a “basic activity of daily living”, e.g. walking, hearing, et cetera.

For example, an individual who was born “legally blind” would qualify for the DTC, but might not be eligible to receive CPP disability payments. Conversely, an individual who was no longer able to work because of a bad back might qualify for a CPP disability pension, but may not qualify for the DTC if he or she could perform all of the “basic activities of daily living”.

The role of the Canada Customs and Revenue Agency is to administer the Income Tax Act as enacted by parliament. The policy rationale behind the legislation falls under the jurisdiction of the Minister of Finance.

Question No. 123—**Mr. Gerald Keddy:**

How many people are affected by the court decision that Treaty 8 members are exempt from federal taxes, and how much money was received from federal taxation of Treaty 8 members in 2000, 1999, and 1998?

**Hon. Elinor Caplan (Minister of National Revenue, Lib.):**

With respect to the March 7, 2002, decision of the federal court, trial division, in *Benoit v The Queen*, it is not possible for the Canada Customs and Revenue Agency, CCRA, to answer the hon. member’s question with precision. There are approximately 40,000 status Indian members of Treaty 8 bands. Of these, about 22,500 live off reserve and would likely be affected by the court decision. Those Treaty 8 members with income or property on reserves already benefit from the Indian Act tax exemption. However, the right described in the *Benoit* case is potentially broader than the Indian Act tax exemption.

The CCRA does not maintain statistics with regard to the amount of money received from federal taxation of Treaty 8 members. There is no requirement under federal tax legislation to indicate one’s treaty affiliation or band membership.

Question No. 124—**Mr. Scott Reid:**

What were the translation costs associated with the production of the report entitled “Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, CEAA, Screening Report for the OMYA (Canada) Inc.—Tay River Water Intake Project”, dated March 2002 and disseminated by habitat chief, Ontario-Great Lakes area, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Edwin R. DeBruyn?

**Hon. Robert Thibault (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, Lib.):** The costs associated with the translation of the document “Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, CEAA, Screening Report for the OMYA (Canada) Inc.—Tay River Water Intake Project” were as follows:

Total as of 22/03/02: \$10, 538

\$2,017—English/French public notice of comment period on screening report (10/10/01)

\$4,675—English/French screening report and revisions from public comment (23/10/01)

\$3,846—English/French translation, amendments, editorial revisions of screening report (11/03/02)

Outstanding payable(s) for translation, amendment and editorial revision to the screening report of March 2002 should be received in the Burlington District Office within the next month.



*Routine Proceedings*

Question No. 131—**M. Garry Breitkreuz:**

With regard to the Canadian Firearms Program: (a) what is the proposed budget allocation for fiscal year 2002-03; (b) what are the line-item cost projections for fiscal year 2002-03; (c) what are the cost projections by department and agency for 2002-03; (d) what is the total cost of the program since its inception in 1995; and (e) what is the projected annual cost for each of the next 10 years?

**Mr. Paul Harold Macklin (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** (a) The Canadian Firearms Centre's, CFC, proposed budget allocation for fiscal year 2002-03 is \$113.5 million.

(b) The CFC line item cost projections for 2002-03 are as follows:

Vote 1—Operating Expenditures: \$97.3 million

Vote 5—Contributions: \$10.4 million

Statutory—Employee Benefits: \$5.8 million

(c) The cost projections by department and agency that will receive funding through the Canadian Firearms Centre in 2002-03 are as follows:

Department of Justice—CFC: \$109.5 million

Solicitor General—RCMP: \$3.0 million

Canada Customs and Revenue Agency: \$1.0 million

(d) The total cost of the program since inception in 1995 is:

From 1995-96 to 2000-01 the net cost of the program incurred by the Department of Justice—CFC is \$484.1 million. This consists of \$551.5 million in gross expenditures minus \$23.1 million in C-17 expenditures minus \$44.3 million in net revenue.

As of March 31, 2002, period 12, the net cost of the program incurred by the Department of Justice—CFC for fiscal year 2001-02 is \$88.6 million. This consists of \$102.9 million in gross expenditures minus \$14.3 million in revenue.

(e) The projected annual costs for the next 10 years are as follows:

i. For 2002-03 the net costs are projected to be \$101.2 million (this consists of projected gross expenditures of \$113.5 million minus \$12.3 million in revenue);

ii. For 2003-04 the net costs are projected to be \$59.8 million (this consists of projected gross expenditures of \$95.0 million minus \$35.2 million in revenue);

iii. For 2004-05 the net costs are projected to be \$44.8 million (this consists of projected gross expenditures of \$80.0 million minus \$35.2 in revenue);

iv. Funding has not yet been finalized for fiscal years 2005-06 through 2011-12, but is expected to continue to decrease.

[English]

**QUESTIONS PASSED AS ORDERS FOR RETURNS**

**Mrs. Karen Redman (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, if Question No. 118 could be made an order for return, the return would be tabled immediately.

**The Speaker:** Is that agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

[Text]

Question No. 118—**Mr. Grant McNally:**

With regard to instances of environmental or other damage at the National Library: (a) how many instances have occurred; (b) what was the type of damage and the date of each occurrence; (c) how many documents, artifacts or other stored items have been damaged; (d) what specific costs for repair, restoration or replacement are associated with those damaged items; (e) how many items have been permanently lost as a result of this damage including the type of item, the date it was damaged, and the value in dollars associated with its loss; (f) how much money has been spent on repairs, renovations or maintenance to the National Library and when did this work take place; (g) what is the current value of the inventory and all holdings of the National Library; and (h) has the government completed a cost analysis of the repairs necessary to maintain the current library as compared to the costs of constructing a new National Library?

Return tabled.

[English]

**Mrs. Karen Redman:** Mr. Speaker, I ask that the remaining questions be allowed to stand.

**The Speaker:** Is that agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

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**MOTIONS FOR PAPERS**

**Mrs. Karen Redman (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Notice of Motion for the Production of Papers No. P-30 in the name of the hon. member for Macleod is acceptable to the government, with the reservations stated in the reply, and the papers are tabled immediately.

That a humble Address be presented to Her Excellency praying that she will cause to be laid before this House a copy of all documents, reports, minutes of meetings, notes, memos, correspondence and briefings between the Government of Canada and Bayer Inc. between October 1, 2001, and October 23, 2001.

**The Speaker:** Subject to the reservations expressed by the parliamentary secretary, is it the pleasure of the House that Motion No. P-30 be deemed to have been adopted?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

(Motion agreed to)

**Mrs. Karen Redman:** Mr. Speaker, I ask that all Notices of Motions for the Production of Papers be allowed to stand.

**The Speaker:** Is it agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

*Government Orders*

**Mr. Greg Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest, PC):** Mr. Speaker, with regard to the Notices of Motions for the Production of Papers, I draw the attention of the House and the government House leader to Motion No. P-32 which has been on file since November 19, 2001.

I will read it to the House and the viewing public to give an indication of what we are looking at. On November 19, 2001 I submitted the following:

That an Order of the House do issue for copies of all documentation including correspondence, memoranda, notes, minutes of meetings, reports, phone records, e-mails, and briefings pertaining to Lancaster Aviation and Airspares Network Inc. between the Minister of National Defence, the Department of National Defence and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

Could the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons tell us why the government is so hesitant? Why is it so reluctant to answer the questions? The questions are important. The Canadian public deserves an answer.

● (1520)

**The Speaker:** Perhaps the hon. member should ask this in question period, but we will hear from the government House leader if he wishes to respond.

**Hon. Ralph Goodale (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I know the hon. member treats the subject matter seriously. There was an occasion in the House some weeks ago when a motion of his with respect to a similar subject matter was defeated. I assure the hon. member it was done on a procedural basis and not because of the substance of the matter.

This is the first time to my recollection that the hon. member has raised the subject matter directly with me. I will make the necessary inquiries to try to provide him with a substantive answer at the earliest possible date because I take his point seriously.

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## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

### CANADIAN INTERNATIONAL TRADE TRIBUNAL ACT

The House proceeded to the consideration of Bill C-50, an act to amend certain acts as a result of the accession of the People's Republic of China to the agreement establishing the World Trade Organization, as reported (without amendment) from the committee.

**Hon. Anne McLellan (for the Minister for International Trade)** moved that the bill be concurred in.

(Motion agreed to)

**The Speaker:** When shall the bill be read the third time? By leave now.

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Hon. Anne McLellan (for the Minister for International Trade)** moved that the bill be read the third time and passed.

**Hon. David Kilgour (Secretary of State (Asia-Pacific), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise to support Bill C-50, perhaps not surprisingly. The bill presents a number of legislative initiatives that would enable

Canada to take full advantage of the new rights it obtained as a result of negotiations for China to accede to the World Trade Organization.

Over the past two decades China's economic growth has been among the highest in the world. Last year it was Canada's third largest trading partner after the U.S. and Japan. China's growing importance in the world economy makes it crucial that the Government of Canada continue to seek a constructive and open relationship with China. We need to ensure the continued capacity of Canadian exporters and investors to have access to the business opportunities in China that will present themselves as China grows and develops.

[Translation]

Now that China is a member of the World Trade Organization, the WTO will be the main multilateral forum to discuss these issues. The WTO is the main international forum for negotiating reductions in trade barriers. The members of the WTO have also agreed on a series of shared principles and practices to regulate and administer international trade. The system is based on the rule of law and on fundamental principles such as transparency, fair practices and non-discrimination.

After being admitted into the WTO on December 11, 2001, China began to significantly reduce trade barriers in goods and services. China also began a long-term process to amend its trade laws and regulations to make them compliant with the principles and practices set out in the WTO agreement.

● (1525)

[English]

The broad implications of the WTO rules mean that it will take China some time to implement fully its commitments. Although China's record on implementation so far, less than six months after it acceded, has not been perfect, we are satisfied that things are moving in the right direction and that China has been open to hearing us out and acting upon a number of Canadian concerns.

One of our areas of concern of course is agriculture. We have serious doubts about the unnecessarily heavy trade impact of Chinese regulations on genetically modified foods, such as Canadian exports of canola seed. We are also disappointed that China has still not fully implemented tariff rate quotas that are necessary for trade in a number of agricultural commodities. We will continue to pursue vigorously these matters on behalf of our farmers and food processors.

[Translation]

We will continue to apply vigilance over all Canadian export sectors to ensure that exporters do enjoy the benefits set out in the terms of accession.

China's accession to the WTO provides us with one more way to resolve trade disputes with China. The government will do everything it can to have its rights under the WTO upheld.

*Government Orders*

Our trade relations with the U.S. show that disputes and irritants remain while trade increases and we move toward more complementary economies. Also, during the 50 years the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade was in effect and now under the WTO, we have noticed an unprecedented increase in international trade along with strong economic growth around the world. What is even more important is that this trade expansion led to better quality of life for the residents of trading nations and for all of us.

By joining the WTO, China made a long-term commitment toward freer trade. It has acknowledged the indubitable relation between opening up to the world economy and economic growth. Therefore, we are convinced that China will continue its efforts to honour the international commitments it made during the 15 years of negotiation that led to its accession to the WTO.

[English]

Negotiations to join the WTO usually affect only the acceding country, requiring it to make concessions and changes to its domestic laws and regulations. Amendments to Canadian legislation are normally not required.

In these negotiations, WTO members sought and obtained the right to invoke China-specific safeguards and to apply appropriate non-market economy rules in anti-dumping investigations on Chinese goods. These are the measures that are implemented in Bill C-50 as members will all know.

These measures were designed to address China's unique place in the world economy as a major exporter with high tech production capacity and a large degree of government intervention and involvement in the economy. All WTO members have the right to implement them if they choose to do so. Other members are also taking necessary steps to amend their domestic, regulatory or legislative framework as necessary.

[Translation]

Under the China-specific safeguards, which will apply for 12 years following its accession, that is until December 11, 2013, Canada will be able to impose special trade measures to protect Canadian industries from injurious surges of imports from China.

The anti-dumping provisions in Bill C-50 allow WTO member countries to use special rules to determine price comparability in an anti-dumping investigation, while China makes the transition to a market economy. The rules will be in effect for 15 years following China's accession.

These measures will complement the existing provisions of the Canadian legislation on safeguards and anti-dumping proceedings, which are based on the WTO agreements, including the agreements concerning safeguards and anti-dumping procedures.

• (1530)

[English]

It is important to note that these special measures will apply only to imports from the People's Republic of China. They will not apply to imports from Hong Kong or Taiwan, which are separate members of the WTO.

The government does not foresee an increase in injurious surges of imports from China as a result of the WTO accession which would require the use of the China-specific safeguards. China already has quite open access to Canada's market and its terms of access to the Canadian market will remain largely unchanged as a result of its WTO accession.

Implementation of these measures will ensure that Canada and affected Canadian industries have at their disposal the full range of rights that were agreed to during the multilateral negotiations in the World Trade Organization. Such industries support the implementation of these measures in Bill C-50 since they provide additional tools to respond to potentially injurious imports.

For all of these reasons, I respectfully urge colleagues in the House to support the bill.

**Mr. John Duncan (Vancouver Island North, Canadian Alliance):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to discuss Bill C-50, an act to amend certain acts as a result of the accession of the People's Republic of China to the agreement establishing the World Trade Organization.

I was in Doha, Qatar on the Persian Gulf in November at the WTO fourth ministerial conference. The People's Republic of China and Taiwan both gained entry to the WTO at the conference. Indeed it was a very historic time. After all, China is the most populous nation with 1.3 billion people. Even at this very momentous and historic occasion it was apparent there was continuing discomfort between the People's Republic of China and Taiwan. At the time I put out this statement:

The addition of China and Taiwan to the WTO membership has added complexity to achieving consensus and may force the WTO into a United Nations style compromise. If this proves unworkable, bilateral and regional trading arrangements will continue to be necessary to ensure the World Trade Organization does not stray too far from a free trade agenda.

I obviously had some concerns at that time. China having one of the biggest and fastest growing economies in the world is undoubtedly a welcome addition to the World Trade Organization.

Mike Moore, the director general of the World Trade Organization, said that Beijing's greatest policy shift since the 1948 revolution which brought the communists to power was the signing of the 900 page document requiring the opening up of China's markets. In essence, what has happened is that China has agreed to join the world trade community on the world's terms. It has agreed to open up its marketplace to foreign trade and investment in return for reciprocal access to the markets of 142 WTO members.

This will undoubtedly have profound implications for China's internal politics and the compact between the people and the government. Some people have even argued that this is basically signing the death warrant of the communist party power in China. The communist party began opening up the economy about 20 years ago but resisted political reforms. Now that it has reached its limits of economic expansion, it now requires broader social and political reform.

*Government Orders*

Accession to the WTO has actually been described as the cleaver which severs the communist party's wilting grip on the last fragments of Marxist socialism. One might say that is an optimistic view. What is an optimistic view and one which I share is that its accession to the WTO will inevitably lead toward making the state subject to the rule of law. The communist government never accepted that. Let us hope that next year, upon the retirement of the prime minister of China, who was so instrumental in pushing this through, this does not fall apart.

• (1535)

We must remember that it would be in no one's interest for China to once again shatter into social discord. With accession to the WTO it is a huge opportunity for the Chinese people to create a modern political, social and economic system.

China has a somewhat open market. Millions are expected to lose their jobs. One of the reasons for that is because there are so many people working on the land who were there because the communist government subsidized crop prices in order to keep people on the land. Many of them will lose their jobs. Already we have 200 million unemployed in China. Therefore that is a very significant thing for them to do in a knowing fashion.

I am optimistic about all this because, if one goes back approximately 12 months, it was last April 1 that we had the collision between the U.S. reconnaissance aircraft and the Chinese jet fighter off the southeast coast of China. We remember all the diplomacy and the toing and froing on the fact that the U.S. plane was forced down into the People's Republic of China and was not given up for a long time and not in one piece. It had to be shipped back in pieces.

It was also done against the backdrop in that same month of April of a huge arms sale authorized by President Bush to Taiwan. Even against all of that just a short few months later everyone was on the same page more or less at the talks in Doha.

China has the potential to become one of the centres of manufacturing in the world. It currently attracts about three-quarters of all foreign direct investment in Asia which approximates \$47 billion U.S. last year.

As a condition of its entry into the World Trade Organization China had to agree to allow existing WTO member states to bring in such legislation to deal with possible market disruptions or trade diversions. That is what Bill C-50, which we are debating, is all about from Canada's perspective. It would manage the transition period over the next decade or so as China modernizes its internal economic structures and legislation to conform to WTO practices.

All told, China must amend 570 pieces of legislation and more than 1,000 central government rules and regulations as part of its entry into the WTO. We have ongoing training on how to handle WTO rulings and so on occurring with judges and other members of the bureaucracy in China. Other countries have had to do this also under previous accessions. There are huge compliance problems related to even existing legislation in China.

From an overall perspective the impact and effect of Bill C-50 is that it is sufficient and appropriate legislation to ensure the creation of wealth, both for Canada and China, and not simply the

redistribution of wealth, a concept that is foreign to at least one party in the House of Commons.

• (1540)

The legislation would introduce safeguards. While temporary in nature they would increase import duties, restrict the amount of imports and impose tariff rate quotas, all of which would protect Canada's economy and eliminate the possibility of injury to Canada's domestic industry during this phase-in period.

It is important to note that there would be a huge and wrenching change in China. We are putting in our safeguards for this is not a one-sided exercise. We must recognize that there are huge changes implicit in the accession of China to the WTO. It is very positive for the international community that, after 15 years of knocking on the door, China is now a WTO member. Actually, this accession was very good psychological news for the global economy.

The U.S. is the biggest foreign market for China and it has enjoyed most favourite nation trade status for some time and has been slowly lowering tariff and non-tariff barriers to imports and foreign investment. The other psychological good news is that the international community recognizes that China's huge population is in an early explosive economic boom. This has lots of people excited, particularly since Japan appears to be in somewhat of a perpetual recession these days. Japan being the traditional Asian powerhouse.

For the record, we cannot overlook certain issues associated with China. These issues include: the nature of China's economic system, its dealings with human rights, and its treatment of Taiwan.

As a condition of member concurrence for accession of China to the WTO, all of the WTO members were allowed to bring in legislation to deal with possible market disruptions or trade diversions. We must not forget that China has a state controlled economic system that is protectionist, still exploits labour and represses human rights.

While we welcome the People's Republic of China to the WTO we must wonder how serious it is about free trade from time to time as it still has a culture that invites unilateral actions which raise concerns in the international trade community. This is not to say that China's membership in the WTO would bring about overnight change and improvement in these areas. It does mean that China is now compelled to honour its WTO promises and obligations that in effect would make China more accountable for its practices in question.

The international business community of course does not enjoy litigation and reversion to the courts but rather looks for voluntary compliance with the spirit and intent of following the rules.

*Government Orders*

Regrettably just last week China's state run postal monopoly issued an order that would: limit express delivery by private companies to articles more than 500 grams, or 1.1 pounds; require all prices to be higher than the postal authority's; and forbid delivery to government, military or communist party offices or of any item addressed to an individual. This would virtually shut down the operations of United Parcel Service, Federal Express and three other large courier-style companies that are doing about 60% of the business in China.

● (1545)

Foreign companies have protested this attack on a very profitable business with annual sales of \$1.2 billion growing at the rate of 30% to 50% annually. This industry carries billions of dollars worth of goods and employs tens of thousands of people. The central government's unilateral decision is bad for business, sends the wrong message and is counterproductive to China's own interests.

One can assume its centralized, top down, unilateral decision making based on its historical reference took over and reality would quickly lead to overturning this dumb decision before it does further damage. However China Post insists its actions did not violate any WTO agreements.

It is true that China agreed to open up many markets, but no deal was made on the courier business. Others argue that the attempt to restrict business breaks China's promise not to further limit any industry that has already been opened up to international competition and is in violation of WTO principles of nondiscrimination and fair competition. Inevitably disputes will arise and many will not be as clearly one sided as this bad decision by China on courier services.

Disputes are a part of any relationship and I am convinced that by having China in the WTO with a rules based framework, all parties are better off than if China were to be excluded. The greatest levellers of all are investors because unless they have confidence in the system, they will not invest, and without investment there will be no new wealth generated, and without new wealth everyone is a loser.

I now wish talk about Taiwan. Taiwan has a population of about 23 million. It is Canada's eighth largest trading partner and has the world's 12th largest economy. The significance of our trading relationship with Taiwan is often downplayed and that is why I emphasize our very significant relationship with Taiwan.

Last year Canadian exports to Taiwan almost exceeded \$1 billion and our imports exceeded \$4.4 billion. It is close to being completely WTO compliant in terms of legislation and only 14 pieces of legislation had to be amended as a result of its entry into the WTO.

Taiwan is a democracy that upholds the rule of law and goes out of its way to ensure it meets the spirit and the intent of international trading rules. While one must realize that Canada has to deal with the People's Republic of China and maintain good relations with it, there is no reason why Canadian policy toward Taiwanese government officials could not be much more accommodating.

In fact, Canada's relationship with Taiwan is hostile. Two years ago the Taiwanese minister of foreign affairs was not permitted to enter Canada.

● (1550)

One year ago the Taiwanese minister of health was not allowed into Canada because Canadian authorities said he might lobby for Taiwanese observer status at the World Health Organization.

To date Taiwan has developed formal diplomatic ties and established embassies in 28 small and uninfluential countries. We all heard the Liberal minister three days ago in the House excuse the Liberal government behaviour toward Taiwan's request for observer status at the World Health Organization and Canada's lack of support for that by saying that no other western democracy at the executive level had done it either. I say that is not a very good way to display leadership on this issue.

The U.S. senate has approved that request and we are waiting for the entire congress to do the same thing, which means the house of representatives also has to support that status.

What we have is 28 small and uninfluential countries with formal diplomatic ties and established embassies. As another 100 countries, like Canada, do not officially recognize Taiwan, it is forced to operate with "economic and cultural offices". Canada has three such offices.

The Liberal government endorses the one China policy through its actions to the detriment of Taiwan, a healthy democracy, a very significant trading partner and a friend. Quite simply, this is wrong. The Liberal government is being hypocritical on human rights. When it comes to human rights issues in China, it is prepared to overlook abuses and at the same time tries to marginalize Taiwan which upholds the rule of law.

I have recently received letters from both the president of the Taiwan-Canadian Association of Ottawa and the president of the Greater Vancouver Taiwanese Canadian Association asking for my support in Taiwan's request for observer status at the World Health Organization. I have responded to both organizations and have stated that I fully endorse and support Taiwan's request for observer status.

The Canadian government cannot just sit back and remain silent on Taiwan issues and subordinate its Taiwanese policy to the dictates of the Chinese government. His Holiness, the Dalai Lama in a May 21, 2000, interview with Reuters and the American press stated that "Joining the WTO organization, I think is one way (for China) to change in the right direction... I think it is a positive development. In the long run, certainly (the trade agreement) will be positive for Tibet. Forces of democracy in China get more encouragement that way".

China's movement against Falun Gong and similar Qi-gong groups, Protestants, Catholics and other religious groups reveals China's lack of commitment and adherence to internationally agreed upon standards for human rights. This should concern us all and we should especially be concerned about the lack of commitment the Liberal government demonstrates in holding China and Cuba accountable.

*Government Orders*

The Canadian government pretends to crusade for human rights issues internationally but when it comes to human rights in China or Cuba, it sells them out very quickly.

For this reason, it is extremely important that Canada express its concern on a number of issues including freedom of religion, expression, assembly, association, women's rights, children's rights, minority rights, good governance, cultural, social and economic rights.

• (1555)

I know that my colleague from Calgary Southeast will expand on some of the issues to which I just made reference and I welcome his comments.

I will conclude by saying that the world stands to benefit substantially from the liberalization measures that China has proposed as part of its secession to the WTO. I will also add that I agree with the safeguards and provisions that are contained in Bill C-50.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Paul Crête (Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup—Témiscouata—Les Basques, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I am very pleased to rise today to speak to Bill C-50, an act to amend certain acts as a result of the accession of the People's Republic of China to the agreement establishing the World Trade Organization.

Westerners and North Americans have had various visions of China over the years. First, I think it has always been for us the land of all inventions. One just has to think of paper, rice growing and all kinds of inventions showing that the Chinese have often been more advanced than the rest of the planet. These inventions are still used today on a regular basis.

It is also a land of missions. Missionaries from Quebec and Canada went to China, particularly at the beginning of the 20th century, and projected a certain vision of China in their relationships with Quebecers and Canadians.

It is also a communist country which, after World War II and because of efforts made during the war, chose a government that had concrete objectives to ensure that everyone had food to eat and a place to stay.

We must always look at these decisions in the context of what the country went through and avoid making judgments based only on our perceptions as westerners, without taking into account the reality. But the Chinese revolution is still an important aspect. The father of the Chinese revolution, Mao Zedong, brought deep changes to the Chinese society. Today, the Communist Party of China is still running the country and is trying to adapt to the realities of today's world. It is another aspect of China that we have seen these past few years.

Over the last ten years in particular, it has become the caricature of a country ruled by free market and unbridled capitalism, just as we would have probably seen in North America in the late 1800s or early 1900s.

I believe we must look at the reality of China. That is why I am very pleased to have an opportunity to speak, as the vice-president of the Canada-China Parliamentary Association. Last year, I had the

opportunity to travel to China and see for myself, during a brief but informative two week visit, some of the reality of eastern China, by far the most developed part. China has met some extraordinary challenges in terms of economic development. It has created entire new cities from scratch, some of them models as far as environmental concerns go. I think we could take a few pages from their book in this area.

There is a whole other aspect to China, however, the western part. Then there is the matter of China's relations with Tibet, Taiwan and Hong Kong. These are all very important points.

As for the international trade agreement, implementation of which will make it possible for China to accede to the WTO, and to have an entry into Canada under that agreement, let us recall that there are 1.250 billion people in China. Such a large population requires a particular kind of administration. Governing a country with a population of 30 million, as we have in Canada, is not the same as governing a country of 1.250 billion. It is the seventh ranking world economy and the ninth ranking in exports. Its population accounts for one-fifth of the world's total population.

We are therefore dealing with a country that is a power unto itself because of its population numbers and its actions. Within 20 or 25 years, China may have made unprecedented progress and may even have become the leading economic power in the world.

Something we should bear in mind is that, ultimately, what we are doing here in amending our statutes to provide for the accession of China to the WTO and to adapt Canada's and Quebec's legislation, is being done to increase bilateral trade between the two countries. For Quebecers and Canadians, there are clear benefits in having access to the Chinese market, and China has an interest in having access to our market and skills. In that sense, this agreement seems relevant and positive for both parties.

• (1600)

Included in the positive outcomes is the development of China. We are witnessing an improvement in production, which is very important, and in the quality of life there. My discussions with Chinese parliamentarians and private citizens suggest that in the last ten years, the quality of life has improved significantly in China, especially in urban areas.

But there are still daunting challenges to take up in rural areas. We can have exchanges on this, because we also have a long way to go. Setting up a Canada-China parliamentary association to foster discussions on this among parliamentarians has been a significant development. These discussions are part and parcel of all that needs to be done and of the relationship that should be maintained between our two countries.

This new way of doing things is quite the challenge for China's economy, and also for the whole western world. In the year 2000, trade between Canada and China totalled some \$15 billion.

*Government Orders*

There are challenges to be met. China, Canada, Quebec and all the countries that are part of the WTO must create more wealth. But this also means that we have to deal with all the problems relating to the distribution of this wealth, and with the concerns relating to regional development. As we saw, the major challenge for the Chinese is to develop the vast natural resources located in the western part of China.

During the discussions that I had with Chinese parliamentarians, I told them, based on our experience in Quebec and in Canada that “it is fine to develop natural resources, but if you undertake this process, you must find ways to ensure secondary or tertiary processing from the outset, to avoid situations where certain regions are dependent on central regions and, in the end, the economic support provided is insufficient for them to catch up”.

So, the distribution of wealth is a challenge. Discussions are taking place between Chinese and Canadian parliamentarians, including some from Quebec, on how to generate wealth in an open economy as opposed to a state controlled economy, and on how to distribute this wealth.

The Chinese government is pondering certain issues. Should it set up an employment insurance program? Is the Canadian model adequate? Are there other ways of doing this? The Chinese asked questions and they are trying to determine what is appropriate. We should continue this dialogue with them.

It must also be realized that China is facing this extraordinary challenge at a time when the Chinese government is about to undergo a change. A clear pattern has been noticed in recent years and decades. What spirit will drive China's new elected politicians and leaders? Will they keep going in the same direction?

It is in our best interests, I believe, to maintain relations with China, through measures such as its accession to the WTO, to allow us to help the Chinese in their efforts. In so doing, we will benefit from what they can teach us, just like they benefit from what we can teach them.

There is also a considerable challenge as far as international assistance is concerned. China is not simply a developing country, nor is it simply a very developed country, it is a country dealing with both of these realities. In terms of economic development, eastern China's growth has outperformed that of Canada for several years. In western China, conditions are comparable to those in developing countries, in Africa or elsewhere in Asia. This reality will require that the Government of Canada take a more flexible approach, one that will take into consideration this reality.

If we simply compare China as a whole, we will end up with an approach that does not correspond to either part of China. We need to take this into account when setting up co-operation between Canada and China, keeping in mind that the Government of Canada has a lot of catching up to do when it comes to foreign assistance.

• (1605)

There are priorities, such as Africa. The Prime Minister wants this to be taken care of this summer, at the G-8 summit. However, judging from his last trip, there was not enough leadership to provide innovative ideas that would help rebuild the African economy. The Government of Canada needs to invest more money and be open to

new methods of international co-operation. As for China, it will require a more original approach due to the conditions that I mentioned earlier.

Canada also has the challenge of dealing with Hong Kong. Hong Kong was a very significant entry point for Canadian immigration. Now, with economic change and more openness, the Chinese may have easier access to Canada by going directly through the government of the people's republic without necessarily having to go through Hong Kong. This would require very different services for these clients. As a result, the available resources should be redistributed. We may want to have more officials present in China to provide this service adequately.

There is also an interesting model. Indeed, Taiwan is a member of the WTO, as is the People's Republic of China. I was musing that, if the Canadian government had a similar philosophy, perhaps Quebec could have been a member of the WTO, as is Canada, and would have been able to express its views. However, the level of flexibility observed in China—as the result of history, of course—has not yet been reached here.

I would add to this picture the vision that I developed during my trip to China, last year, to really show the evolution and the reality there.

First, we travelled to Beijing, the capital of China, where the meeting of the people's national convention is held annually. It is the equivalent of the House of Commons, but it does not sit quite as long. Still, there are 3,000 delegates at the people's national convention. This means that, instead of having a House of Commons with 301 members such as we have here, there are 3,000 delegates in parliament. This creates a totally different approach. People who sit in parliament are not only from the Chinese majority, but also different ethnic communities. We can see that China is not monolithic. It is made up of a number of particular components.

Beijing is also a city and a capital that is being totally transformed and undergoing a lot of modernization. It also carries China's history. When one visits the Forbidden City, one can understand certain things about how the Chinese approach the world. It is important to know this aspect of reality. The Olympic Games will be held there in 2008. This is another aspect of their opening up and, in this regard, everyone in the world wants to give China a chance to take its place. The Chinese really have the ability to do so. When they pursue development, one can be sure that things go well. I strongly believe that they will be ready for the 2008 games.

I also visited Shanghai, an ultramodern city which has undergone several periods of colonization by the French, the English and other communities which influenced its development. However, it is still an important world trading hub. It is clear from the volume of transactions in its stock exchange that this is a very important part of the world when it comes to trade.

*Government Orders*

A neighbourhood has been developed there which makes it an ultramodern city. One has the feeling of being in a city of the 21st or 22nd century. This is an aspect of avant-garde China that we did not know about, but which is a sign of things to come in the next 10, 15 or 20 years in the economic development of China, with respect to the place it will occupy internationally and the balance it will help to create vis-à-vis the major power represented by the United States of America. Since the iron curtain has come down, since Communist government almost world-wide have been overturned and parliamentary democracies put in their place, Americans might, in some respects, be tempted to throw their weight around a bit.

• (1610)

I think that it is in our interest that the hubs be diversified and that we use the opportunity presented by China and its vast market, its economic potential and its great influence in Asia, to strike a balance on our planet. Ultimately, it could benefit both international decision-making and bilateral trade.

Obviously, there are challenges associated with signing an agreement such as the one concerning the accession of China to the WTO. It will require the development of even greater mutual respect between the two countries.

We even see this with our neighbour to the south, with whom we have long had a special relationship. We realize that a strong economy such as the U.S. can have a tendency—this is very clear in the case of the softwood lumber crisis—to take a bit of an imperialistic and protectionist attitude, an attitude that expects a small country like Canada to bow to the dictates of the U.S. economy.

So international agreements bring some discipline to these relations. We are going through some difficult periods, and the great American economy is still using measures to try to silence Quebec and Canada in the softwood lumber dispute. However, the WTO will make a ruling which, I believe, will be favourable to Canada.

The same thing may happen with China. It will be important for both sides to understand that there probably will be disputes to settle, but that it will be possible to do so within the WTO structure, which is far better than settling disputes in an unregulated context where the strongest always wins. We will certainly have the opportunity to influence each other.

As far as the judicial system is concerned, we could pass on to them elements which could easily be integrated in their own system and allow for a better harmonization between the will to administer justice and the way to do it. I think we have some co-operation in this area.

It seems to me that there is another very important aspect, and it is one of the main reasons why the Bloc Québécois supports this bill. China and Quebec have developed a very special relationship.

Let us not forget that, during Mr. Bouchard's last economic mission, when he was still the Premier of Quebec, an agreement was signed for a Chinese textile company to open a plant, the China World Best, in Drummondville. It has now been built along the Jean-Lesage highway, and we can see the Chinese flag flying alongside those of Canada and Quebec.

Finally, it is the first investment outside China that is made this way. It was because the Chinese found in that region workers with expertise in the area of textile, and also because there is some kind of sentimental connection between Quebec and China.

Let us not forget that China is currently the country where the largest number of inter-country adoptions are negotiated by Quebecers. I think this is very important to the Chinese people, and we must understand that.

Before having business dealings, before getting involved in trade, those people need to have a well established personal relationship. They have to trust those they are dealing with. In that regard, they seem to have hit it off with Quebecers.

I noticed this, especially when I visited Shanghai. Besides Canadian representatives, we met with the Quebec delegate in Shanghai, Mr. Milot, who made me aware of these facts. He even came to Rivière-du-Loup the year after to give a lecture and to meet with potential exporters from my area and look at market development opportunities. At that time we were saying, "China will join WTO in the a few years and that will give us additional opportunities".

We have now reached that point. The time has come for us to pass the legislation so that Canadian laws are consistent with the agreement allowing China to join the WTO.

We will have to meet particular challenges to enter these markets and get our share. I know that many engineering firms from Quebec have projects, in particular with regard to international co-operation in China. There is much interest in pursuing this.

• (1615)

Not a week goes by without a Chinese delegation coming to Quebec to meet with people who would like to be partners in economic development. Over the next few years, these visits will continue yield very promising results.

The last time a group of parliamentarians came to visit, we went to the Quebec National Assembly. The group was able to watch a debate between Bernard Landry and Jean Charest on the Quebec national issue. I was very proud that they were made aware of that reality. This can be done through interpersonal contacts, when parliamentarians come to visit us and when we go to China. Then we go beyond economic issues to establish personal relationships that will help to enhance co-operation.

Canada has a good reputation in China. Members will recall that Doctor Norman Bethune fought beside Chinese revolutionaries in the army of Mao Zedong. He has become a symbol for the Chinese. When Chinese parliamentarians come to Canada, they show great respect for him; they want to see the house where he grew up. Doctor Bethune spent a good part of his life in Montreal. He fought in Spain during the civil war, then went to China. He was an extraordinary ambassador for Canada. We can use this image to move things forward and improve not only our economic relationship but also our cultural and social relationship with China.



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A good example of this is the Cirque du Soleil, which will set up in China. On the cultural level but also in terms of employment, this is a sector where we thought that the Chinese could bring us something, which remains quite possible anyway, but we will also have an exchange in that area, and the Cirque du Soleil will be present in China.

The agreement itself provides an opportunity to access an extraordinary market. It will also be a fantastic challenge. The 12 years provided for will be truly needed. This also implies on our part that we understand that in a win-win relationship, the Chinese will gain access to part of our market, while we will gain access to part of theirs, thus increasing co-operation, and economic, cultural and social exchanges.

One issue remains very sensitive however, and that is Tibet. It is believed that the accession of China to the WTO will give us greater influence through our relationship with the Chinese people and the Chinese government. I believe this is the right approach.

A concrete example of this is the fact that the Canada-China Parliamentary Association will travel to Tibet during its upcoming mission, in May. The Chinese themselves have offered us this opportunity. We will thus be able to witness firsthand what is going on and to assess the situation not only on the basis of what we will be shown but also through personal contacts and our personal assessment. I think this is the right way to advance issues.

During that trip, we plan to visit western China, where much remains to be done in terms of development. In that area of international co-operation, there is room for much collaboration between Canada and China, with great benefits for both. I think China's accession to the WTO will also be useful in this respect.

To conclude, I think it is important to be realistic about our relationship with China. It is important to ask ourselves questions about our overall relationship with China. We should not shy away from asking the tough questions. What does the future hold for Tibet? How does China see its relation with Tibet? All the discussions I have had so far have always been quite straightforward.

• (1620)

We can help this giant of a country which is China to take its place in diplomatic and economic relations around the world. This would also promote trade expansion. And then economic growth will lead to peace on earth, improved human rights and mutual understanding and assistance. We should not simply pass judgment on what is going on while ignoring history.

This means that, for all these reasons, it is appropriate for us to support this legislative proposal we have before us, which amends the Canadian International Trade Tribunal Act, the Customs Tariff Act and the Export and Import Permits Act.

This has some similarities to the signature of a treaty, which is interesting. It may be something the Canadian government should give priority to, that is having treaties ratified here on a regular basis, so that the House of Commons, which represents the population as a whole, can have a say, not just the Canadian government.

If this situation could serve as a precedent, that might indeed be worthwhile. In fact, what we are voting on here is legislative

amendments to Canadian statutes, but at the same time this is a sort of agreement in principle or ratification by the House of Commons of the negotiations carried on for some years between China and the WTO and a number of countries, so that in the end an agreement can be reached that will make it possible to increase economic, social and cultural exchanges with the Chinese government.

Regarding this legislation we are voting on today, I hope that in 10, 15 or 20 years, we will realize that this has been an important step in increasing economic exchanges. It will also have contributed to a better balance between the various world powers. Based as it is on mutual respect between Canada and China, it will also make further developments possible.

I am sure that, down the road, a sovereign Quebec would also subscribe to the same sort of legislation in order to make it possible for the relationship between Quebec and China to expand in the years to come.

As we know, there have been collaborative efforts in the past, for instance in connection with hydroelectric power. The expertise we possess here in Quebec was of use in the Three Gorges dam project, which will likely be the biggest such project in the world. They are preparing to submerge whole sections of the country. This is a huge challenge, to put all the necessary infrastructure in place and to ensure that it is done under optimum conditions as much as possible.

There are interesting business opportunities. I know that one company from the Quebec City area signed an agreement with the Chinese government for the development of Chinese heritage historic sites, which, unfortunately, will be flooded once the dam is in place. However, there is still an interesting market for a new technology industry with computer potential and Internet based. So it is a project which, in the end, will give results.

I will give another example that shows the importance of this trade. We often hear that such international agreements are far removed from us and have no impact on us. However, to give members an example, the last crisis in Asia had an impact in my riding, in Saint-Alexandre, more particularly in a hog slaughterhouse. We used to sell a lot of pork on the Asian market, but there was a decrease in demand because of the crisis in that region. This created a surplus production that had to be distributed on the North American market. In the end, it had an economic impact on the number of jobs in the village of Saint-Alexandre-de-Kamouraska, in my riding.

Therefore, it is important to realize that these decisions made regarding international agreements are also a way of trying to increase our economic potential. One important challenge will be to ensure that the regions outside large urban centres can benefit from these exchanges.

I know that the Université du Québec à Rimouski, among others, has had this type of exchanges, as well as the Rimouski community in general. Chinese students will soon arrive in Rimouski to study there. This kind of co-operation can also work both ways.

*Government Orders*

• (1625)

For all these reasons, let us hope that this agreement will lead to increased exchanges. As for us, let us ensure that all the regions of Quebec and Canada can reap the benefits, so that signing this agreement and voting in favour of this bill makes us all winners.

[English]

**Ms. Libby Davies (Vancouver East, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to speak to Bill C-50. Other of my colleagues in the New Democratic Party have spoken during other stages and we remain opposed to the bill.

In listening to the debate today I have to say the irony of it has not escaped me. Much of the discussion by various members has focused on their feelings, issues and concerns about the People's Republic of China, the status of its workers and the environment. In reality we are debating something that has already happened. The People's Republic of China joined the World Trade Organization last December.

We are debating what is primarily housekeeping legislation which deals with the consequences of dealing with Canadian industries that will be negatively impacted and seeking some protection for about 12 years. I suppose in the total order of things as consequences go, the best thing is to try to seek some protection. However the underlying issue that keeps coming out in the debate, whether one is for or against the bill, is the position of China and its role within the WTO and its role within the global community.

It is ironic because the vehicle that has allowed this to happen is a membership in a very elite club. My colleague from the Bloc, whom I usually agree with, a few minutes ago talked about China taking its place. I want to express the irony that somehow the World Trade Organization has become the symbol of whatever it means for a country or a nation state to take its place. The WTO in and of itself is fundamentally an undemocratic institution. It is fundamentally an organization that places the needs of capital movement and of corporations to do trade with the minimum amount of rules above the issues of a democratically elected parliament here in Canada or anywhere else in the world.

In some ways it is unfortunate. I sense that a huge gap exists between what we would like to debate in terms of our concerns with the PRC and our ability to express them, which somehow has been channeled into the WTO. The WTO has made it very clear it has no intention, despite many efforts, to deal with concerns around the environment or international labour laws. I say that by way of preface because that is fundamentally why members of the New Democratic Party cannot support the bill.

Today in question period I raised the terrible situation that is unfolding in my province of British Columbia around the massive restructuring of health care. It relates to this bill because what is taking place in my province is a wholesale restructuring of public services that have been built up over many decades.

Sixty-five hundred people stand to lose their jobs in the health care system. These are people who care for frail people, elderly and sick people in community care settings and long term care institutions. Those of us who have been following the debate in B. C. are most concerned about the jeopardy of what is now to come

and that is privatization. With privatization comes an exposure of these public services under these trade agreements. Therefore they are very much related.

The situation in B.C. is very much on my mind today. I continue to get calls from constituents who are asking what happened to our medicare system and why is it not at the top of the federal political agenda. Is the feeling that we have this universal medicare system not one thing that speaks to who we are as Canadians?

• (1630)

Yet it too is under attack because of lack of funding, because of setting the stage for privatization that would be facilitated not by the bill itself but by what has caused this bill to come forward, which is the World Trade Organization. I am deeply concerned about the state of things, where we are headed as a country and where the planet is headed.

I have already said that the WTO is a very undemocratic organization. There is no opportunity for ordinary citizens to be heard. My colleagues in the federal NDP and I have participated in many rallies, workshops and demonstrations around trade liberalization and what is commonly referred to as globalization. Amazingly thousands of people have taken it upon themselves to become informed and educated about organizations such as the WTO, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

Even a decade ago there was very little information known about these already very powerful organizations. The only reason we have some knowledge about their vast impact on our daily lives, the economy and the democratic life of our country and our ability to create laws in the public interest is citizens have taken it upon themselves to become informed and to organize, to mobilize. They are standing up for the public interest. They are saying that the interests of all of us in society are more important and have to take precedence over private corporate interests. That is another reason we in the NDP are strongly opposed to the WTO.

In terms of the impact Bill C-50 would have, I listened to my colleague from the Bloc speak about model cities in China, about China taking its place and that this was a way to encourage development between the two countries. It seems to me that the ability to do that through the WTO or through trade agreements is non-existent. Whenever issues around human rights, the environment or poverty have been put forward as part of the trade issue, they have always been bounced off.

We have seen it time after time with team Canada, with all of the infrastructure and the millions of dollars it costs to put those things together, when it goes on those big trade missions to China. Various organizations have sought to have the social concerns and the human rights concerns put forward as part of those delegations and missions. They are always told that they do not belong there as it is a trade mission and to have faith because trade will improve everything else. I do not see any evidence of that happening.

*Government Orders*

One of the most disturbing things is that China stands out internationally for its flagrant disregard of human rights. We have heard about the situation in Tibet. I have been to many rallies to support the self-determination of the Tibetan people. Their cultural, religious and political freedoms have been brutally squashed in the People's Republic of China.

We only have to look at the situation facing workers in that country. We know that in March of last year China actually ratified the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, which is good. It is a very important covenant to which Canada is also a signatory. It spells out social and economic rights of individual citizens of a country that has become a signatory.

Ironically China filed a reservation under article 8.1(a). What does that do? It prevents workers from freely forming trade unions.

● (1635)

This encompasses the most fundamental freedom, the right of workers to organize freely without interference from the state or from the employer, to negotiate on a level playing field, to assert their rights and to have decent working conditions and wages. The People's Republic of China filed a reservation on that section.

There are numerous abuses and violations of the most basic rights that would be recognized by the International Labour Organization. We hear horror stories of what happens in factories. In some instances women involved in mass production are actually locked in a factory and when a fire breaks out they cannot escape. Many workers burn to death.

It is hard to imagine that kind of situation in Canada, although it did happen many decades ago. One reason for May Day and International Women's Day is they recognize the struggles that have taken place for working people to actually assert their rights and to win the most basic thing, which is safe working conditions.

It is 2002 and we are still facing the reality that the People's Republic of China does not allow those basic freedoms to be enjoyed by its workers. It does not allow basic political freedoms or religious freedoms. We have witnessed the Falun Gong members on Parliament Hill. They have spoken out because their members in China have been tortured, murdered and silenced from practising their beliefs.

These things are relevant to the debate today because we are part of the global community. In some ways we are part of setting the standard. Many people around the globe look to Canada as a place that has a basic value of respecting fundamental human rights.

Historically, we certainly have had situations in Canada. One only has to look at the tragedy of what has happened to the aboriginal people and how they have been marginalized, criminalized and had land taken from them. We have our history too. Nevertheless, many people look to Canada as a place where human rights are respected. There is a belief that we should be a leader in the international community not only to defend rights in Canada but also to speak out in the international community.

While the consequences of the bill are to provide some safeguards to Canadian industries and hopefully it will have some effect in that way, I have to be very clear that even at this late stage of the debate

the NDP cannot in principle support the bill because of what underlies it. Based on the conversations I have had and the education I have gone through in talking with constituents, I feel strongly that people in Canada want to see our federal government engage in trade practices that are fair.

We want to engage in trade practices that recognize the protection of our environment, the establishment of important labour standards, the establishment of social standards. They cannot be divorced from trade. These are not separate but are part and parcel of one another.

We stand most strongly for the idea of fair trade. It is not that we are opposed to international trade. It exists. Trading has gone on for thousands of years and more so in today's technological world. However, I would stand here today and every other day and argue that we should never defend a jurisdiction, an agreement or an organization that usurps democratic practice or undermines democratic legislation and removes the power of government in favour of creating an unfettered field for private corporations.

● (1640)

Even the notion of free trade is such a loaded term because it is basically free trade at the expense of everything else. I reject that. It is not that I reject trade. I reject the notion and the practice of what has now escalated so rapidly in the last decade. Now we see that after 15 years of negotiations the People's Republic of China has entered this world elite club of the WTO. Some people I know see that as fabulous news and as the vehicle for better relations, but let it be said that I think there is a growing number of people who do not see that as an appropriate vehicle and who will continue to speak out to defend human rights and to protect the environment.

In closing I would just reiterate that we do not support the bill. We will continue to express our concerns about what happens in our own country and also internationally. We are part of the global community. I am very proud that defending international covenants and international human rights is something that we as New Democrats do and I know we will continue to do that.

● (1645)

**Mr. Larry Bagnell (Yukon, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I have a question but before I ask it I just want to respond to the point about the changes in the Chinese postal system. I understand that those changes came in on March 6 but have no effect on Canada and the minister will be continuing to follow up on that.

I am glad that the previous two speakers mentioned Tibet and showed that the interactions we have had through initiatives such as this have led to it being open and to the fact that our parliamentary association can visit next year. This will hopefully once again help make improvements in that area.

*Government Orders*

I am also delighted that the previous speaker mentioned Falun Gong and what its followers have been through. I was happy to present a petition in the House about that from my riding of Yukon. I remember one night being out at midnight in the rain here and talking to those supporters in the rally who were still awake. They have suffered much. I think all members of the House are in support of eliminating human rights violations and suffering such as the Falun Gong followers have undergone.

My question is this. The WTO requires China, as a member, to follow certain principles and practices that will contribute to a more open and participatory system of government. The member might be aware of them, so I will not list them unless I am asked. Certainly having a more participatory government is beyond economics. Certainly the member would at least support that part of this initiative.

**Ms. Libby Davies:** Madam Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his comments, particularly as I know that he too has supported the Falun Gong members who have been here on Parliament Hill. I know that many of us have supported their efforts. However, if they were in the House today and we were to ask them as people who have direct experience, those who have come from the People's Republic of China or have friends or relatives there, whether or not they think the WTO will be the mechanism that will guarantee or even necessarily improve their freedom to speak and to practise their beliefs, I think the answer we would get is no.

Yes, I certainly support anything that will encourage a more participatory government, but I think we have to understand that the WTO is about trade liberalization. It is not about strengthening workers' rights, basic social rights or political and civil rights. It does not deal with those aspects. There may be some references to having greater transparency in government and so on. We certainly saw all of that during the FTAA in Quebec City. In fact, it was very interesting to see how all of the leaders who came here from the Americas, and including our own Prime Minister, were bending over backwards to try and convince us that the FTAA would be the vehicle to improve democracy in the Americas, yet there is really no critical analysis to back that up. In fact the evidence is to the contrary. When we look at these trade agreements, we see that they actually provide more and more concentration of power among fewer and fewer people. They actually undermine the democratic process.

While I appreciate the member's comments, I guess I have to disagree. I do not believe that the WTO, in either the short run or the long run, will deal with some of the concerns that have been expressed today in the House about Tibet, about the situation of workers, about the environment or about improving democratic government.

• (1650)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. André Bachand (Richmond—Arthabaska, PC):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to take part in this debate that has been going on for a long time and started long before the introduction of this bill. We have held debates in committee and in the House on the future of the People's Republic of China and its accession to the World Trade Organization.

I want to take this opportunity to congratulate my Progressive-Conservative colleague from Cumberland—Colchester on his excellent work in raising the awareness of our caucus and explaining the situation to us.

We often hear about the WTO when there are problems and we win or lose our case. What we are dealing with here is the accession of a player who is most important by its territory, its economy, its political situation and its population. Obviously, the rules of the game will change, and Canada should be ready for this.

That is why this bill provides for a buffer period Canada has secured through negotiation concerning the opening of our market, especially in the textile industry.

This being said, textiles are indeed going to become a major market, and this is a matter of some concern in our country, especially in Quebec. As we know, the Quebec textile industry was hard hit by uncertainty and job losses when the Free Trade Agreement with the United States and Mexico came into force.

However, there is no need for concern. We need to adjust. Currently in Quebec the textile industries that upgraded have been able to start exporting again while taking free trade into account, of course.

Indeed, when you open your market to major players such as China, there is a period of uncertainty during which some sectors of the economy suffer losses. However, these sectors know this is coming. They have enough time to prepare for it.

I remember that when the previous government had negotiated the first free trade agreement with the U.S. certain measures were proposed. They were far from being perfect and probably insufficient. However, associated measures were offered to help with the transition from a closed market to an open market.

Sadly, we see no such thing in this bill. This may not be the appropriate time, but the government is not putting forward any financial incentives or measures to give those businesses that will most likely be harmed by the accession of China to the WTO a chance to further upgrade; the textile industry is a case in point. I hope that when the bill is passed in both Houses, when China officially joins the world trade community through its membership in the WTO, the government, while respecting its agreements with our southern neighbours and our international commitments, will put in place incentives to help the industry prepare and upgrade.

The WTO is not the answer to everything. One should not think that just because China is joining the WTO, the Tibet issue will be solved tomorrow morning, questions regarding human rights will be answered tomorrow morning and the religious groups issue will be solved tomorrow morning. This is not the way to look at it.

That being said, there are two ways of approaching the problem. There are countries where sanctions are necessary and others where incentives are necessary. In the case of China—I will remind members that the negotiations were extremely lengthy—incentives are better suited to the situation than sanctions. We are not talking here about apartheid, even though Quebecers and Canadians wonder about respect for human rights in China. The advantage of China's accession to the WTO is that it will level the playing field.

*Government Orders*

•(1655)

Let us take dumping as an example. It is an important aspect. Several businesses in our country are eager to see other countries, such as Russia, join the WTO, because their industry will be better off with regard to exports. I am talking of course about the asbestos industry. It is known that Russia is dumping asbestos all over the world. In my riding, 300 jobs could be lost this year and a mine will be closed. I take this opportunity to urge the government to act quickly to develop a policy on the use of asbestos.

WTO rules will open up the market, which means that there will be increased interaction between China and its WTO partners. Therefore, it will be easier to go to see the positive things that China has to offer. For the less positive things, we will not wait to receive official invitations. We will be able to go to see, because the WTO also opens up the country. It is not only an economic tool.

When billions of dollars are traded, not only does it have social and economic impacts, but it also has impacts on culture, on the environment and I would even say on tourism. If we get to know China better and if China gets to know countries such as Canada better, things will most certainly improve.

That being said, I think the WTO is far from perfect. This will cause problems, but look at what Canada has been able to do through free trade. We have been winners in this. Changes have to be made, of course; there is always a transition period.

The WTO will not solve all our problems, because it is only an organization. There are other economic and trade agreements. Members on this side of the House have mentioned that, with all the various international agreements we have, we do not know which one prevails. For instance, in a dispute with our neighbours south of the border, is it the Free Trade Agreement or the WTO that prevails? We know our American counterparts quite well; we know they will use the one with which they stand a better chance to win.

Given all the agreements being signed by Canada, there will come a time when we will have to wonder which one has priority. We are talking about expanding the free trade area of the Americans, with the FTAA. Which of these agreements will have priority? These questions need to be asked and deserve to be answered.

I will stop here, because I feel we have had a very good debate on this bill. A lot of members took part in it. Again, I would remind the House that the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade has always wished for citizens and stakeholders to take part in the process and not only be consulted.

On the eve of the negotiations concerning the FTAA and other agreements, the committee asked for some kind of permanent mechanism to keep in touch with the people we represent. We still do not have one. People ask us questions about this bill, the WTO and other international agreements we are currently negotiating, and we do not have a way to get back to them. We will have to rethink the whole consultation process and the way to ensure Canadians get involved.

The Progressive Conservative Party will be glad to support this bill, while reminding everyone, of course, that some parts of our economy will suffer, at least during the transition period, but

eventually China, Canada and every country in the world should be able to benefit from this initiative.

•(1700)

[*English*]

**Mr. Larry Bagnell (Yukon, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, a previous speaker, who is in support of the bill, mentioned that millions of people could lose their jobs in China. I do not necessarily agree with that comment. By opening up trade, a lot of markets in different countries will be more open to Chinese business which will increase employment. If there are certain instances where prices are too high in China, then opening up trade to lower priced products will actually help poor people in China. Previous trade liberalizations have shown an increase in jobs. I hope that one day this may help my riding of Yukon with its mineral and forest production because China uses these types of products.

I would like to ask the member two quick questions.

First, there is a safeguard in the bill to protect Canadian companies for up to 12 years if needed, and I know he is a strong supporter of free trade. Does his party have any concerns about repercussions to Canada for such trade sanctions, if we were to add it?

Second, the member's riding of Richmond—Arthabaska may have some products similar to those found in my riding. What industries does he think might be hurt or helped in his riding with this new trade liberalization?

[*Translation*]

**Mr. André Bachand:** Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his question. This may annoy our Liberal colleagues a little, but it is always nice to see that they have changed their position on free trade treaties since the 1993 election. As we know, only fools never change their mind. Therefore, we are very happy that those on the other side of the House have changed their mind.

Actually, some protection measures do exist. However, as things stand now, there could be job losses. The protection measures deal mostly with dumping and they are good measures. However, eight, ten or twelve years is a very short period to allow a company to transform itself and adapt to a new reality called China.

Nevertheless, we are satisfied with the provisional protection measures. They are necessary. As I said in my previous speech, while complying with current worldwide agreements, we would also like to see incentives for companies that are most at risk.

The textile industry will be one of the most seriously affected. We do not need to convince anyone of that. It is written in the bill. These are not my words. Everyone agrees that this industry is more at risk. Where are the incentives which will help the textile sector to transform itself and become more efficient?

*Government Orders*

Having said that, we are satisfied. In my riding, I hope that the asbestos industry will be among those that will benefit from the accession of China to the WTO. As we know, Asia buys large quantities of asbestos. Unfortunately, Russia is dumping this product. China needs it. If this product is used safely—it is like a credit card—you get the benefits out of it and you forget its inconveniences.

I would like to point out, however, that in my riding there are textile companies specialized, among other things, in jeans, shirts and skirts; they could be hard hit. In the Eastern Townships, several companies have already closed down. I am thinking in particular of people who bought cotton. Since cotton imported from China, for example, is much cheaper, some companies have already been forced to close down.

That being said, in the end, the hon. member is right: an agreement like the one before us today is beneficial for all citizens of the participating countries.

[*English*]

**Mr. Pat O'Brien (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for International Trade, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I listened to my colleague opposite with great interest. He asked a question about what would take precedence, NAFTA, WTO or FTAA. Clearly the cornerstone of the government's trade policy is WTO. Having said that, we proceed on three fronts. Recently we had a Canada-Costa Rica and a Canada-Chile bilateral in NAFTA or FTAA, which is a new initiative, then regionally in those areas, then of course multilaterally at the WTO. The WTO is the cornerstone, but softwood is a sad example unfortunately. They compliment each other and to some extent there is an overlap. We will be taking action at NAFTA and WTO. It is not a case of them being mutually exclusive oftentimes.

The member talked about the issue of possible assistance to certain industries such as textiles and so on. When I was in Shanghai representing the Minister for International Trade last June at the APEC trade ministers meetings, I had a chance to intervene for businesses in my own part of Ontario. Their problem was the bureaucracy they faced in China and the rules for doing business there.

My question for the member is this. Does the member not feel that by having China as a member of WTO it will force the Chinese to move toward respecting rules based trade and will that not benefit all Canadian companies?

• (1705)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. André Bachand:** Mr. Speaker, I thank the parliamentary secretary for his question.

He is right in saying there is overlap between the international agreements, and in referring to the softwood situation. All party politics aside, we hope this dispute will be settled as soon as possible. I know the parliamentary secretary wants the same thing. He is deeply committed to this.

As far as the agreement with China is concerned, the parliamentary secretary is right. There is the question of bureaucracy and respect for existing international rules. A U.S. committee said that, over the last ten years, China has not abided by a single

international agreement. Naturally we hope that, with China becoming a member of the WTO, it will abide by the rules of that organization, and will comply with all the subsidiary agreements or parallel agreements existing between China and other countries or continents of the world.

We support this bill because we truly believe that the attitude of the People's Republic of China toward Canadian investors, and toward the industries in the parliamentary secretary's riding, will be such that they will not only find a market, but a real openness. When we say that we will open up a market, we must also recognize that we will have to facilitate access to that market.

What the parliamentary secretary said is true. There is some red tape and too much of it. It is complicated. Some have even alluded to the fact, inaccurate I hope, that little envelopes were being handed out here and there. If the market does open up, it will not only be an opening for 1.250 billion people, it will also mean access to a certain way of doing things. I believe the WTO will modernize China's way of dealing with other countries and that Canada will profit from that. However, we must be very careful about the China's weak points in view of its accession to the WTO.

[*English*]

**Mr. Jason Kenney (Calgary Southeast, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to debate Bill C-50. I had an opportunity to speak to this bill at second reading and while it is not an issue that falls within any critic portfolio, I have held a very strong ongoing interest in Canada's relations with the People's Republic of China, particularly vis-à-vis that country's and government's atrocious record of the systematic violation of human rights.

First, I am deeply ambivalent about the accession of the PRC to the World Trade Organization. On the one hand, some have made a plausible argument for it. My colleague, the trade critic for the Alliance and member for Vancouver Island North, quoted from His Holiness, the Dalai Lama, to the effect that China's accession to the WTO may prove to be beneficial in encouraging democratization and respect for human rights. On the other hand, I have seen China's increased integration with free market, democratic, western economies, without a concomitant result in terms of respect for human rights or democratization of its political system. To the contrary, there has been considerable evidence presented by independent observers such as Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International in recent years that, as the Chinese economy has become ostensibly more open, its political system has become actually more closed.

I am deeply skeptical about the entire premise of our so-called foreign policy vis-à-vis China known as constructive engagement. It seems to me that it is constructive for the Chinese communist oligarchy, which often benefits financially in a very direct personal way through its interest in state owned companies. It is beneficial for it to create a political pressure valve which can, by increasing living standards for a certain segment of the Chinese population, remove immediate political demands from parts of the Chinese political constituency.

*Government Orders*

However I do not think it is constructive for the vast majority of Chinese who continue to live under a one party, dictatorial, totalitarian regime whose entire premise is that the state and its prerogatives trump the dignity of the individual human person. We can see that this is the case. I will address the human rights situation in China in a moment.

Let me say that while I am ambivalent and skeptical about China's accession to the WTO, I support Bill C-50 because it at least provides restrictions for China's membership in the WTO vis-à-vis its bilateral trade relations with Canada. It provides certain basic trade remedy tools to private industry in Canada to address potential dumping or unfair trade practices on the part of the PRC, in particular on the part of government owned enterprise there.

For instance, I spoke with a constituent who owns a medium sized private sector manufacturing company in Calgary that produces precision machinery and equipment. He advised me that he was losing orders both here and in the United States to Chinese exports that were being sold at what he believed were prices that were below the actual raw material input costs for these precision implements. That would seem to be a prima facie case of dumping or an unfair trade practice on the part of the Chinese.

● (1710)

While I am a free trader in principle and do believe that rules based trade agreements based on minimizing tariffs and barriers are very important policy objectives for an export oriented country such as ours, I do think that when we are dealing with a communist system, such as that in China where the vast majority of the economy is operated by state owned enterprises and where they have no tradition of rules based trade or the rule of law itself, domestically or, I would argue, internationally, it is extremely important to have a framework for addressing unfair practices. I understand that the WTO's agreement itself with China runs over 900 pages long to ensure that the PRC government does observe free trade practices and does not engage in dumping and other unfair practices.

I further understand that the Chinese will have to amend some 400 to 500 domestic statutes in order to come into full compliance. Frankly I am skeptical about their political will or ability to do so, given that if they really do implement and adopt the spirit of the WTO, there will be tremendous transitional costs to its economy. For instance, their banking sector, which is very precarious, is overwhelmingly dominated by government owned banks, the Bank of China. If they face serious open competition by the western financial services sector, we will see major challenges to the Chinese banking system. I really do question whether or not the communist leadership will pay the price that comes along with the benefit of membership in the WTO, but we will see.

Another reason why, notwithstanding my ambivalence, I support the bill and lean toward supporting China's accession to the WTO is that its accession came concurrent with the accession of the Republic of China on Taiwan which, until quite recently, had a more important and robust trading relationship with Canada. I think that we spent so much time focusing on the PRC that we sometimes lose sight of the fact that our trading relationship is quite exaggerated. We know that nearly 90% of our international trade is conducted with the United States and we have a relatively small trade with the PRC. In fact

within that trade we receive, I gather, about \$11 billion in imports from China annually, but our exports to China are a fraction of that. We are running an enormous trade deficit with that country, whereas we have had a long and very profitable relationship with the Republic of China or Taiwan since the early 1950s.

The Republic of China on Taiwan has, I believe, the 11th largest economy in the world. It is our eighth largest trading partner. I find it bizarre and sometimes shameful that the government treats the state of the Republic of China on Taiwan as a pariah. We will not even grant visas for their ministers to visit Canada on a personal basis let alone on an official basis. We refuse to encourage its accession even as observers to the World Health Organization or UNESCO. We will not allow high level Canadian government delegations to visit Taiwan and to improve our already strong and vigorous trade relationship.

With that responsible, independent democracy, which respects human rights, why is it that we allow Beijing to dictate our foreign policy vis-à-vis Taiwan? I have a suggestion. It may have something to do with the fact that the Prime Minister's son-in-law is chairman of the Canada-China trade council, that his son-in-law's father was the founding chairman of that entity a couple of decades ago and that one of the very few large companies in Canada with any interests in the PRC happens to be Power Corp.

There is no rational explanation for Canada's utter subservience to the foreign policy of the PRC vis-à-vis Taiwan and our refusal to speak out vigorously about human rights abuses in that regime except for the attitude of the Prime Minister which, I submit, is influenced strongly by his fairly close direct family relations and interests in the PRC.

● (1715)

It is not untoward to suggest that the one company with a longstanding industrial relationship in the PRC, owned by members of the prime minister's family, has an interest in maintaining, I would argue, a policy vis-à-vis Beijing which is not in the best interests of Canada and which is definitely not consistent with our historical track record as a champion of human rights and democracy.

I will now turn my remarks to that issue. Bill C-50, regrettably, does not even mention in principle the importance of China moving toward a system that recognizes democratic rights.

I will quote from Steven Mosher who is a long time expert on the human rights situation in China. Before congress last year he said "If medals were given to nations for committing human rights abuses, China would win the gold every time.

### *Government Orders*

Let me detail for members some of the more recent reports on human rights abuses in that communist country perpetrated by the regime so we get a concrete sense. We often talk about human rights issues as some abstract obsession of certain academics or people on the political left. In fact millions of real people with families and real lives are today enslaved in forced labour camps in the PRC. They are denied the ability to practise their religion with freedom and impunity from state sanction. They are rounded up and imprisoned without due process and are denied the ability to choose their own local representatives. They are jailed for their political opinions or for dissenting from the official communist line.

Let me refer to information from the Cardinal Kung Foundation which observes the situation of loyal Chinese Catholics. According to the Kung Foundation, the Beijing regime's persecution of the underground Catholic church has not only been carried on for the last five decades but this persecution has recently taken on a greater degree of intensity and boldness.

For example, Father LU Genjun, 39 years old, an underground Roman Catholic priest, was arrested about two months ago shortly before Easter in Baoding, Hebei province. The statement on his arrest clearly listed Father LU Genjun's crimes as receiving theology training, being ordained a Roman Catholic priest and conducting evangelization activities. He was arrested and jailed for doing what a priest does. He is only one of thousands.

New York based Human Rights Watch, in its 2002 world report, said:

China's increasingly prominent international profile, symbolised in 2001 by its entry into the World Trade Organisation and by Beijing's successful bid to host the 2008 Olympics,—

That is absurd. The report continued:

—was accompanied by tightened controls on fundamental freedoms.

Human Rights Watch tells us that China's recent strike hard anti-crime campaign has been used to crack down on political opponents of the regime. "10,000 suspected criminals were arrested in the first months of the Strike Hard campaign...and by the end of October at least 1,800 were executed and twice that number sentenced to death", according to Human Rights Watch.

It added that moves to eradicate the Falun Gong group led to torture and imprisonment.

Police also cracked down on several other Buddhist and Taoist mystical groups, while closing hundreds of unregistered Protestant and Catholic churches.

Falun Gong continued to experience the harshest repression, with thousands of practitioners assigned to re-education through labour camps and more than 350 imprisoned, many for nothing more than printing leaflets or recruiting followers.

A report from the *Far Eastern Economic Review* states:

In the wake of its being awarded the 2008 Olympic Games, China is ordering one of its remote, poverty-stricken regions to commit at least 20,000 abortions by the end of this year.

● (1720)

This is part of China's forced abortion and mandatory sterilization program which we shamefully finance through our contributions to the United Nations fund for population activities.

ZENIT, the news organization, reported:

In the middle of the night July 10 the police took Father Liao Haiqing of Yujiang Diocese from his home and then interrupted a study-meeting of 15 other priests of the same district, arresting those present—

They were sentenced for being political opponents of the regime simply for preaching the gospel.

Amnesty International's 2001 report states:

Evangelical Protestants and Roman Catholics who worshipped outside the official "patriotic" churches were the victims of a continuing pattern of arrests, fines and harassment. Scores arrested in recent years remained in prison or labour camps.

The report went on to point out:

In September, 24 Roman Catholics, including a priest and 20 nuns, were detained in Fujian province when police found them holding church services in a mushroom-processing factory. According to reports, Father Liu Shaozhang was so severely beaten by police during arrest that he vomited blood. Two of the nuns were allegedly released the following day after parishioners paid a large sum of money to the police; the whereabouts of the other 22 detainees remained unknown—

I could go on and on but I would suggest that my colleagues or the general public could consult the websites of Amnesty International, the Human Rights Watch, the Cardinal Kung Foundation or any one of the organizations established by the North American refugees from China who were involved in the Tiananmen Square protest and massacre of a decade ago. That was a massacre which the PRC communist government has still not acknowledged or even apologized for and this is a country whose human rights record the Prime Minister will not deign even to comment on in a seriously negative light.

I propose that, and Human Rights Watch recommends this, as a part of China's accession to the WTO we should insist that China invite the United Nations special rapporteur on religious intolerance to return to China to assess progress toward implementation of his 1994 recommendations in that country.

The government's silence on the issue is not new. Just recently the United Nations Human Rights Commission had its annual session in Geneva. Absent, shockingly, was the United States of America which had been voted off the commission by human rights paragons, such as Syria and Libya, who sat on the commission. For 40 years the U.S. representative on the UNHRC had put forward a relevant motion each year critical of China's human rights abuses but the U.S. was not there this year.

Canada was there but we did not stand in the breach. We did not offer a motion critical of China's human rights record. While the UNHRC was condemning Israel for defending its sovereignty, a motion voted on by countries like Libya, we did not stand up to criticize the arrest of innocent Chinese for practising their religion and holding political views at variance with that of the totalitarian regime.

The current member for Mount Royal, when he was a law professor, said two years ago:

I think our indifference, sometimes clothed in the notion of neutrality, means we're coming down on the side of the victimizer.

Warren Allmand, former Liberal MP, said:

It is the Prime Minister's...single-minded approach to boosting trade that has watered down Canada's previously harder line on Chinese human rights abuses.

The Prime Minister was quoted on February 12 of last year as saying:



The press wanted me to give instructions to the Chinese. I said we have to put it into perspective a bit. You know we are 30 million. They are 1.2 billion. They want me to tell the Chinese what to do, but they don't want me to tell the premiers what to do.

It is absurd to suggest that this country, which regards itself as a paragon of human rights and democracy, should take that approach.

In closing, I will support the bill only because it does impose restrictions and ensures fair trade practices on the part of the PRC.

• (1725)

However I will do so with strong opposition to the government's most obsequious policy of any western government toward the totalitarian regime in China. All members in voting on this should keep in mind the millions who are in forced labour camps and whose human rights are being violated on a daily basis by that country.

**Hon. Diane Marleau (Sudbury, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I listened to the hon. member and could not help but think how wonderful it is to be young, to know everything and to have all the answers.

I do not know how many members have raised children but I have. I will tell the House what I have said to my children when they said they knew everything. I used to say to them that I hope they get it all done while they still know it all, because the day they figure out that they do not it will be too late.

There are many problems when it comes to China. However we must remember it has been in existence for thousands of years. We can do more by working with China than sitting here and criticizing it.

That is what the Prime Minister was saying when he said that the premier of China wanted to tell him what to do, but he answered that he could not even tell the premiers of the provinces what to do. He had a lot of legitimacy when he said that. I believe the method that we have is far more constructive.

• (1730)

**Mr. Jason Kenney:** Mr. Speaker, with respect, the facts contradict the hon. member. As I have quoted every independent human rights observer has indicated that violations of human rights have worsened in recent years just when we have accelerated our so-called policy of moral engagement.

I do not know everything but I do know this. Democracy is better than totalitarianism. The respect for dignity is better than a communist system which subsumes the individual to the prerogatives of the state.

We should be willing to use our political, moral, diplomatic and economic powers for instance, to recognize of the sovereignty of the Republic of China on Taiwan. Simply allowing its people to visit this country might be one small way in which we could influence the Beijing regime. The Canadian government is always opposed to Washington dictating our foreign policy. Why is it opposed to Beijing dictating our foreign policy vis-à-vis Taiwan?

*Private Members' Business*

**PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS**

[English]

**CANADIAN FORCES DAY**

**Mr. David Pratt (Nepean—Carleton, Lib.)** moved:

That, in the opinion of this House, the government should, on an annual basis, proclaim the first Sunday in June "Canadian Forces Day" in recognition of the tremendous contribution by the Canadian Forces, both at home and abroad, in such areas as the defence of Canada, our NATO commitments, humanitarian assistance, disaster relief, search and rescue and peacekeeping.

He said: Mr. Speaker, before getting started on this debate I would like to rise on a point of order and seek the unanimous consent of the House to make a couple of minor changes to the motion which I believe would better convey its intent.

I wish to add after the word "proclaim" the phrase "on an annual basis". This would make it clear that the effort is certainly not intended for one year only but rather would be an annual day of recognition for the forces each and every year.

The second minor change would remove the mention of the UN from the motion because a good deal of the peacekeeping that Canada is currently involved in, especially in the Balkans is outside of the jurisdiction of the UN. Therefore removing that would capture all of the peacekeeping that Canada does.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair):** Is there unanimous consent to accept the two changes to the main motion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Mr. David Pratt:** Mr. Speaker, I take this opportunity to thank all hon. members for allowing these changes to occur.

I am pleased and indeed honoured to have the opportunity to debate the motion in the House of Commons. In this regard I also take this opportunity to thank the hon. member for Ottawa—Vanier for switching places in the order of precedence so that this item could come before the House as quickly as possible.

It is not my intention to speak for very long on the motion because it speaks for itself. I would however seek unanimous consent to split my time with the Minister of National Defence who indicated his interest in this matter.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair):** Does the House give unanimous consent for the member to split his time?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

• (1735)

**Mr. David Pratt:** Mr. Speaker, I would also seek the unanimous consent of the House for the following motion. I move:

That the minister's participation in this debate not be considered a precedent.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair):** Is it agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

*Private Members' Business*

(Motion agreed to)

**Mr. David Pratt:** Mr. Speaker, the motion has been on the order paper for approximately the last three years. I placed the motion on the order paper because it came to my attention that unlike many other countries Canada has never formally set aside a day to honour its navy, army and air forces.

Over the years there have been days set aside where base commanders would hold open houses for the nearby communities. However, there was nothing that was formalized which allowed for a more official celebration of and recognition for the valuable role that our forces play both at home and abroad.

The role of the Canadian forces was brought home to us as a result of the tragic events of the past week. It has been a very difficult week for the members of the forces. The deaths of Sergeant Léger, Corporal Dyer and Privates Smith and Green came as a shock to us all. They put themselves in harm's way so that we could be more secure. They gave their lives for their country. One great wartime leader said:

We take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion—that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain.

Putting their lives on the line is what our soldiers, sailors, airmen and women are sometimes called upon to do. It is a tough job. Over the last century more than 110,000 Canadians have given their lives so that we could live in a better world.

We honour our war dead, as is fitting and proper, on Remembrance Day, which drives home the terrible consequences of war.

Having a Canadian forces day is not about our war dead, it is about those who serve us today. It is about the service of the 3rd Battalion of the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry in Afghanistan, the air support elements as well as our naval ships that are part of the allied force in the Arabian Sea. It is about the soldiers that we have keeping the peace in Bosnia. It is about the soldiers who are training a new Sierra Leonean army in West Africa. It is about serving with NATO in Germany. It is about every last person in the Canadian forces who proudly wears the Canada insignia on the shoulder of his or her uniform.

I have been on the defence committee for the last five years. I have been privileged to serve as the chair of that committee for the last year. A number of years ago my colleagues and I had the opportunity to get to know the Canadian forces up close and personal. We travelled to virtually every base in the country. We visited their homes, met their families, spoke to their children. We sailed on their ships, flew in their helicopters, rode in their armoured personnel carriers. Most important, we heard their stories.

I believe members of the defence committee came away from that experience with a profound sense of respect and gratitude for the service provided by members of the forces. We have, I would add, certainly seen that service during some of the recent natural disasters over the past few years. I am thinking of the ice storm in particular, which affected my own community, the Red River floods and the flooding of the Saguenay.

In so many respects the motion is simply about expressing thanks. It is a simple message to members of the forces that we value their service, we appreciate their sacrifice and we acknowledge the very difficult job that they have to do.

Sacrifice is certainly part of the terms of service, whether it is the steady rotations through Bosnia, the six month tour of duty aboard our ships or similar types of deployments by our air force.

As civilians we have seen the video on the news of ships leaving and planes departing for wartorn parts of the world. After the cameras get shut off and the families return to their homes, those on the home front are left to continue the daily routine of preparing meals, sending children off to school, arranging recreation, going shopping, and all without the help of a spouse.

This is done knowing that a loved one is going off to a potentially dangerous place. No matter how we cut it military service affects not only the person in uniform but the family that is left behind. We are also expressing thanks to those service families.

The text of the motion I believe is self-explanatory. However I would like to address the significance of the date, the first Sunday in June.

This date was chosen, and I had some good input on the matter from many other people, because it is generally the start of good weather across the country. Having a Canadian forces day on an annual basis the first Sunday of June would allow families to participate in various activities which may occur at bases across the country.

● (1740)

Also, because of the end of the spring session of the parliamentary calendar this usually coincides with the beginning of June, so this date would allow for statements in parliament in recognition of the forces.

I promised I would be brief and I will hold to that promise. Before closing, however, I would like to note some of the input I have received on the idea of a Canadian forces day. I would like to refer to a communication I received from retired Lieutenant-General Lou Cuppens, who is also chair of the Royal Canadian Legion defence committee. He stated:

The Legion does not view your proposal as contrary to our sworn duty to commemorate the many sacrifices made in the past and present of those who served and continue to serve Canada, but rather, it would view your proposal as one to have Canadians focus, on one day each year, and celebrate the unique contributions and sacrifices of those who served so admirably and capably in the Canadian Armed Forces. We are delighted that you would propose such a [motion] to support and recognize the members of our extended family—the Canadian Armed Forces—and wish to offer the Legion's support to your endeavour.

I also received a letter from the Right Hon. Antonio Lamer, the former Chief Justice of Canada. In fact just over the last week I received over 100 letters, e-mails and communications from people interested in the subject. I will not read his entire letter. It stated in part:

The men and women of the Canadian Forces serve our country day in and day out because they are proud to contribute, not only to our peace and security but to the peace and security of the entire world.

I have one final letter from Major General Lewis MacKenzie, who wrote:

*Private Members' Business*

As someone who has had the pleasure of watching our young men and women in uniform excel, both at home and abroad, under frequently trying and dangerous circumstances and well out of the public's eye and knowledge, count me as a strong supporter of your [motion].

As a Nation which all too frequently focuses on the rare shortcomings of the Forces rather than its unparalleled achievements, the declaration of such a day would be a well earned mark of respect for those who are called upon to do the dirty work for the rest of us.

Finally, I would simply like to say, as I mentioned before, that this is all about saying "thank you" to the members of the Canadian forces. It is about saying that and recognizing the contribution of the forces on that one day of the year. As well, I think we can all learn something from the Canadian forces about the love they have for the country.

With that I will conclude. I look forward to the remainder of the debate.

**Hon. Art Eggleton (Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate very much the House giving me the opportunity to speak on this matter and to support the private member's motion from the member for Nepean—Carleton. I offer him hearty congratulations on what I think is a wonderful initiative on his part and I hope that all members of the House would support the designation of Canadian forces day on the first Sunday each June.

[Translation]

Last week was a very difficult week for all Canadians.

[English]

We continue to mourn the four soldiers who were killed in Afghanistan on April 17. These tragic events have served to highlight for all of us the importance of recognizing the tremendous contributions being made by the Canadian forces.

This tragedy has also served to remind us that our military men and women put their lives on the line for our country and its people in a very real way. I am sure all members in the House will agree when I say that our thoughts are still very much with the families and the loved ones of these soldiers as they are being laid to rest this week. We certainly owe them our deepest gratitude, our deepest respect, just as we owe our gratitude and respect to those who are still serving in Afghanistan and throughout southwest Asia. These brave men and women remain determined to carry on the fight against terrorism, determined to protect Canadians from those who would attack our values and our way of life.

By proclaiming a Canadian forces day we can recognize the many sacrifices they make to protect Canadian interests and to contribute to peace and security. At the same time it gives us a chance to underline how integral the Canadian forces are to Canada's history. Since Confederation, Canadian soldiers have answered their country's call to arms in times of crisis. They have made remarkable sacrifices in the building of our nation. From Vimy Ridge to the beaches at Normandy to Kapyong, tens of thousands of Canadians served in the great conflicts of the last century.

Indeed, our troops have not stood down from conflict in recent times. They have served in the gulf war, they served in the Kosovo air campaign and continue today to go where they are needed. In Afghanistan and the Arabian Sea our forces stand firm in the

international campaign against terrorism. Despite the loss of four of their comrades, their dedication to their mission has not been shaken. They continue to demonstrate the clear sense of duty, courage and professionalism for which they are renowned.

At the same time, we must also recognize the tremendous contributions that our forces have made and continue to make to peacekeeping and peace support operations around the world. They are regularly deployed on operations where threats can range from snipers to landmines to unexploded ammunition. Despite these risks, they are consistently up to the challenge. From Bosnia to Sierra Leone to East Timor, the Canadian forces have shown that they are committed to protecting the innocent and bringing security and stability to shattered communities.

• (1745)

[Translation]

They make major contributions to international security. We only have to look at the figures.

[English]

Today the Canadian forces have over 4,000 personnel deployed on some 13 different missions. While some of these missions are high profile others are less so, but they are no less important. Most Canadians are aware of operations like Bosnia but they may not be as familiar with contributions our military members are making in places like the Sinai, the Golan Heights, Ethiopia, Eritrea, and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

By us instituting a Canadian forces day, citizens across the country will be encouraged to learn more about these kinds of operations. Perhaps open houses in our armouries will help bring the public in to get that knowledge passed on to our young people and to all our citizens. They will be encouraged to learn more about the military and what the forces are doing to make our world a safer, more secure place.

A Canadian forces day would also serve to highlight the important work that our military personnel do here at home, work like bringing relief during natural disasters or conducting search and rescue missions, patrolling our coastlines, enforcing Canadian law and protecting North American airspace through NORAD.

Experience has taught us that all military operations involve risk, hard work and skill. Domestic operations are no exception. I am sure that we can all recall the tremendous efforts our military personnel put out during the floods in Manitoba, the floods in the Saguenay or the ice storm in central Canada.

Whether they are serving here at home or overseas, our military personnel are making a concrete difference to our lives and to the lives of countless others, which is why we should support this proclamation of a Canadian forces day. It would show our men and women in uniform that we value them, that we value their work and that we are proud of what they do. It would show their families that we appreciate the many sacrifices that the troops are called upon to make.

*Private Members' Business*

It is time for us officially set aside a day when Canadians from coast to coast can thank members of the Canadian forces for their service and learn more about what they do, and in the process increase their knowledge and their appreciation. I truly believe that Canadians will appreciate having this opportunity. By designating this day on the first Sunday in June each year, it will give as many people as possible the chance to salute our military personnel. As the member for York Centre, I fully support this private member's motion.

[Translation]

I encourage my colleagues to do the same.

[English]

**Mr. Leon Benoit (Lakeland, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased today to rise in full support of the motion brought forth by the hon. member. It has been some time since we have had a day that recognizes the great service that the members of our armed forces provide to this country. Remembrance Day, the battle of the Atlantic and the battle of Britain are days celebrated by the forces, but those are days that are in place not just to celebrate our forces publicly and the great service they provide but actually to recognize particular historic events. Usually part of those ceremonies is the religious celebration. We have had that in the past.

Armed Forces Day was celebrated first on June 12, 1965. This proposed day would in some way replace that day, a day that gives Canadians an opportunity to celebrate the very important and good work done by the members of our forces. I certainly fully support the motion and I know that my party will support this motion. I think recognizing the work that the members of our armed forces do is very important. I am looking forward to celebrating this day down the road.

I heard the minister speak just a couple of minutes ago. I sat there thinking that he was sincere. He wants to recognize members of our forces for the good work they do. I have every reason to believe that he is completely sincere about that. When it comes to supporting our forces I have to wonder, then, why he does not back up his words and his support for the motion with action.

The members of our forces are neglected and so poorly supported by the government that they serve this country well in spite of what the government provides them to do their job. In spite of that, they serve us so well and have become known worldwide for being able to somehow put together dilapidated and outdated equipment and make it work. They do that and are proud of it, but we should not expect that from our soldiers. That is unacceptable.

It is time this minister stopped just offering the words and started offering the support. I will just mention some of the things that our forces need.

Right now the number of members in our armed forces is down to 53,000 effective strength when our white paper says it should be at 60,000. When the government took office there were 80,000 members; it is now down to 53,000 members. Since this government took office we have lost two members from our armed forces for every member who has been recruited. The auditor general said just last week in her report that it could take 30 years with the current recruitment program in place just to re-establish the size of force the

government is committed to. In the white paper of 1994, which my party played an important part in developing the government committed to having 60,000 members in our armed forces. Now it is down to 53,000 members and it looks like it will get worse.

We have to ask ourselves why the government has not supported our forces in a lot more meaningful way, not just with words but in fact with action. We have to wonder if this downsizing is not actually a sneaky backdoor way of reducing our military while the policy in fact says that we should maintain our forces at 60,000 members. We have to ask that. It is an important question. Right now the number of members in our forces is a problem.

If we look next at equipment we can go through a long list of problems that the government has not dealt with. The Sea King replacement program was in place when the government took office. The day after, it was gone. We still have not put out for tender a replacement for the Sea Kings. The supply ships desperately need to be supported. We are down to two supply ships. Destroyers have a hull life of seven years. It will be very difficult to replace them before the hull life expires and yet there is nothing in place to support that. The words are there but the action is not. This has to be a concern.

● (1750)

There are many other pieces of equipment that must be replaced and many that must be purchased because we do not have them. Strategic airlifts are an example. When we depend on the Americans to provide strategic airlifts to get our military personnel into flood areas in Manitoba and areas hit by the ice storm in Ontario and Quebec we know we have a deficit in equipment. We need strategic airlifts but the government has not provided them and has no intention of doing so. The words are there but the action is not.

When it comes to tactical lifts we will need replacements for our Hercules aircraft down the road. It is a good plane and a workhorse. Some are still quite serviceable but many are not. We need to replace the lift helicopters that were sold off 10 years ago. We need attack helicopters and gunships. These are things a country needs if it is to take part in the type of environment the world is in today.

Since the end of the cold war the world has become an extremely unstable place. There will continue to be at least as many demands on our military in the future as there are now but we will not be able to meet them because of equipment and personnel shortages. The men and women serving in our forces have been overstretched. The government has the words but not the action.

Getting the equipment and people we need in our forces will require money. When the minister is questioned about this on an almost daily basis he says billions of dollars have been spent on the military. In fact the government spends less on the military than it did when it took office. Its words say one thing but the facts say something entirely different. This is completely unacceptable.

*Private Members' Business*

On average our NATO allies spend 2.1% of their gross domestic product on the military. What do hon. members think Canada spends? Is it 2.2%? It is 2.3%? Is it more than the NATO average? No, it is not. We spend 1% of our GDP on the military, less than half the NATO average. Canada is supposed to be one of the wealthiest countries in the world. This is unacceptable. The government's words say one thing but its actions say another.

We need to put resources into our military so we can offer the men and women who serve the equipment they need. We need enough members in the forces to allow military personnel to take breaks between deployments. This is a serious problem. It is leading to serious family breakdowns in the forces. Post traumatic stress disorder is ever increasing. These things are important to our country because they are important to our military personnel.

Today a government member put forth a private member's motion calling for recognition of our men and women in the forces. It is a great idea. I fully support it and believe all our members will support it. However it is not enough. The government must start backing up its words with actions. I have seen no indication that will happen. I will be the first to give credit to the government when it starts delivering to our military personnel what they deserve and need to do their jobs safely and even better than they do now. They perform so well in spite of what the government has provided, not because of it. That is unacceptable.

I would be happy to celebrate a day in recognition of our Canadian forces members. However I would celebrate even more the day the government started delivering the equipment, people and money required to enable our military personnel to do the job the country is demanding of them. I would be delighted to celebrate that but I fear it will not happen under the Liberal government. It will happen when our party is elected, and I suspect that is not as far off as a lot of people would have anticipated a few months ago.

● (1755)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Claude Bachand (Saint-Jean, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Bloc Québécois fully agrees that we should devote a national day in recognition of the Canadian Forces, to recognize what these people have done.

The job of soldier has rarely been valued. During world wars, we tend to value it more. However, when world wars come to an end—and the second world war has been over for a very long time now—constituents and taxpayers often have difficulty recognizing the army's work, and we have to understand why.

We live at a time when education and health undergo great trials, often because the federal government makes very little transfers or not enough transfers. While provinces have to carry all the services, the government here in Ottawa keeps on piling surpluses. The provinces would need a helping hand.

Often, the voter, the taxpayer, does not make these distinctions. When we ask him whether we should invest more money in the armed forces, his first reaction is to say “No, I think there is enough”. We must understand that those in the army feel, I would not say the animosity, but the indifference of voters and taxpayers toward them. Of course, other professions do even more poorly on the popularity

scale. I think that we, as politicians, are on the very bottom of the scale. So we understand what it means to be rejected and to experience animosity.

We must say that soldiers work extremely hard; I can testify to this. Last summer, I took part in a special program developed by the department to raise MPs' awareness of the military. I trained for a week with the Royal 22nd Regiment. I must admit that it was quite exhausting. I had prepared myself a little in advance. I must say this is not easy work. They get up early in the morning, and train non-stop all day. It is not easy to wear the uniform and carry all the equipment over long distances, and the physical test requires that full gear, weighing at least 50 pounds, be carried over a distance of 14 kilometers in less than two hours.

I did not do that. I have to admit I do not know if I could do it. But this is difficult work, and all the more so when there is no gratitude. The motion before us is a form of recognition, and it is important this message gets across.

Admittedly, we are in a bit of a rush at this time of year. The first Sunday in June is but a month and a few weeks away. We should get ready for this celebration. This is an urgent motion.

We are in a special context with all that is going on in Afghanistan, September 11 and all its consequences, and especially our soldiers who have been killed or wounded. Two of our dead soldiers were brought to their final resting place today.

People are more aware of the importance of all this. Committee members, critics and the national defence minister do understand the importance of having our troops in Afghanistan. Maybe this motion comes at the right moment. We should let our troops know that we appreciate their work and that what they do is important to the values of our society. We appreciate their work not only in the offensive role they have in Afghanistan—something that was unavoidable—but also in their other roles as well.

The value of our military is even better recognized in peace-keeping missions. There have been important situations where the Canadian military have taken position on the line separating two opposing camps, for example in Cyprus and Bosnia.

● (1800)

In fact, following the training I mentioned earlier, we were deployed with the third battalion of the Royal 22nd Regiment in Bosnia. We visited every Canadian camp and were able to see how important our presence is over there.

We should not attach a value to these deployments. We should not think that the troops deployed in Afghanistan are more deserving than those in Bosnia. Each group of soldiers has its own specific characteristics as does each theatre of operations.

*Private Members' Business*

Our troops are doing a very good job over in Bosnia. I can only agree with General MacKenzie, who pointed out that Canadian soldiers have also died in peacekeeping missions. I think it is time for us to recognize these people.

Recently, soldiers have died in a more dangerous setting, working alongside the U.S. forces in Afghanistan. It was an unfortunate accident. Still these people have lost their lives defending our values.

The same thing goes for our peacekeepers. They often find themselves on the front line, coming under enemy fire while trying to keep the two sides apart. Some have lost their lives. So, it is important to also recognize their contribution.

The motion also contains other important concepts, in my opinion. With respect to disaster relief, I know all about it. During the ice storm the situation was quite bad in my riding of Saint-Jean.

I take every opportunity to salute the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry battalion. I was saddened to hear the news that four of their soldiers had been killed, because it was the PPCLI that came to our rescue in 1998 during the ice storm. My region is located in what was called the triangle of darkness, between Saint-Jean, Granby and Saint-Hyacinthe, where virtually everything was destroyed. The armed forces helped us out enormously.

My office was closed and I moved in with the armed forces, next to the commander's office, where I was briefed every morning. We would really have been in trouble if the Canadian armed forces had not come to our assistance then.

There were also the Saguenay and Red River floods. These are all disasters in which the armed forces have helped. At such times, the public's appreciation is greater, because it is happening in their community. So the armed forces help taxpayers. At times like these, people are inclined to be more grateful.

Today, people in the riding of Saint-Jean know that military operations are taking place in Afghanistan, but they are not a witness to them every day. The importance of helping victims of the disaster is also obvious.

As for the importance of NATO, but for its intervention against Milosevic, something terrible would have happened. What happened in Bosnia was terrible enough, so we can only imagine what would have taken place if NATO had not stepped in.

In this connection, Canadian fighter planes flew several missions in Bosnia to get rid of a dictator who was conducting a genocide. We are commemorating the Armenian genocide, but this too was a genocide.

It was the UN forces, including Canada's troops, which rushed in to try to sort things out and they were successful. Milosevic had to withdraw and stop the ethnic cleansing going on in Bosnia.

It is the same for humanitarian aid. There is no doubt that when major disasters occur around the globe, Canadian armed forces are often called in. We then send help to these people in need. Specialized teams will often travel to the site to offer assistance. This is part of our international commitment.

So let us therefore renew our appreciation of the past as well as the present role of the Canadian forces. In so doing, we may perhaps interest young people in entering a career where they will be recognized.

We are beginning with a day of recognition, and this is important. I therefore hope that this motion will be passed quickly. I wish to tell our Liberal member that he can count on our support to pass it quickly, because the first Sunday in June is fast approaching.

There is a military base and a former military college in my riding, where there are still many members of the military. I will be pleased to get together with them on this day in recognition of the Canadian armed forces.

• (1805)

**Mr. Yvon Godin (Acadie—Bathurst, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to speak to Motion M-334. For those who are watching us, I think it would be useful to read the motion again. It says:

That, in the opinion of this House, the government should proclaim the first Sunday in June "Canadian Forces Day" in recognition of the tremendous contribution by the Canadian Forces, both at home and abroad, in such areas as the defence of Canada, our NATO commitments, humanitarian assistance, disaster relief, search and rescue and UN peacekeeping.

I am sure that my colleague from Sackville—Musquodoboit Valley—Eastern Shore—that name is difficult to pronounce for someone like me—would have liked to be here, especially since he is our party's defence critic. Unfortunately, he is in Dartmouth today. He wanted to be there to pay tribute to one of the soldiers who died in a very unfortunate accident in Afghanistan.

I also want to thank the member for Nepean—Carleton for bringing this motion to the House of Commons, and I want to thank the parliamentary committee that made it a votable item. A private member's motion may or may not be votable. This one was made votable, which shows a desire to support such a motion. It should have been done a long time ago. However, as I have always said, it is never too late to do the right thing. Therefore, I congratulate the member for Nepean—Carleton for bringing forward this motion. I can assure him that the New Democratic Party will support it.

It is a truly important motion. When looking at the regrettable death of these four soldiers, it is like people who lose their lives at work because of an unfortunate accident.

Before coming to this House, I worked as a miner. I was not really an apprentice. I was a machine operator underground and I worked with the miners. We often lost people working underground. It is not pleasant to lose a co-worker, but we need miners. It is not pleasant to lose a fisher, but it is his job.

*Private Members' Business*

These soldiers lost their lives on the job. Their families have our sympathies. This is a regrettable incident, and we extend our condolences to the families who have lost loved ones. These were people who were prepared to go to other countries because of their belief in freedom. They believe that the whole world should be free. They went out to defend the cause of freedom at the request of the democratically elected government of Canada. The government decided to send troops to war rather than on a peacekeeping mission like before. The decision has been made, so now we have to support our soldiers.

I can guarantee that we do just that. Our leader, the hon. member for Halifax, has said so often in this House. Make no mistake. Just because we are the opposition, we may not always agree with sending our soldiers at war, when they should be on a peacekeeping mission. But when they are at war, we support them. These are Canada's soldiers, these men and women who are defending a cause believed in by many throughout the world, those who do not believe in terrorism.

We also support the Family Resource Centre in its assistance to the families of the dead and wounded soldiers. This is a truly important service.

● (1810)

During World War I, 66,000 Canadians lost their lives. More than 45,000 Canadians gave their lives for peace and freedom during the World War II. The Canadian army developed an enviable reputation after this.

The Canadian Forces also have a role to play in the defence of our country, and also with other countries, such as the United States; there is also the work they do with NATO and other allies.

The Canadian Forces have taken part in international security operations and as peacekeepers under the aegis of the UN, such as in Kosovo.

Peacekeepers have provided a safe environment and humanitarian assistance to the destitute. Up to 80,000 Canadian soldiers have taken part in more than 30,000 peacekeeping missions.

They have taken part in the cold war and the gulf war. Currently they are taking part in the war against terrorism in Afghanistan. It is important to recognize the Canadian soldiers, the men and women who do this work.

But let us return closer to home. As my colleague from the Bloc Québécois and others have mentioned, five years ago in Manitoba, when the Red River overflowed its banks, I am sure that Manitobans were happy to have the Canadian Forces lend them a helping hand.

In 1996, I am sure that people in the Saguenay region were pleased to see the Canadian Forces come to aid.

As the Bloc Québécois member mentioned, they travelled to the Montérégie, the triangle of darkness, during the ice storm. I have brothers-in-law and a sister-in-law in Saint-Luc, along the Richelieu River. They were without power for a month. These people experienced great hardship because, with today's lifestyle, they were not used to living without power. This made me realize what people went through.

The same thing happened in eastern Ontario. Our troops were there to help, both morally and physically. There were people helping Canadians and Quebecers.

The motion brought forward by the hon. member for Nepean—Carleton is important. It provides that the government should proclaim the first Sunday in June “Canadian Forces Day”, in recognition of the contribution made by our armed forces to Canadians. We must recognize that we truly need them and that we are extremely pleased to have them.

Last Sunday, I met with some veterans from Bathurst. We were remembering their work during World War I and World War II. I am sure that these people are glad to be able to say today “Canada will finally recognize, each year, the work being done by the Canadian forces.” I think recognition is the best gift we could be giving them.

There are a lot of other gifts we could give them, but we must thank them for the good job they are doing with the tools they have. It would be nice if the government could give them more money to help pay for new uniforms or equipment. It would be nice if the government could invest more in the army. We hope the government will do it. We hope it will think about it.

What the Bloc member was saying is true. Sometimes, people say that we should not be spending all that money on the army, because we need it for health care, education and so on. But we cannot do without the armed forces.

So, our troops need to be well-equipped. That is part of the deal. With a surplus of billions and billions of dollars, I think it is time for the federal government to take a step to give help and support to our men and women of the Canadian forces.

On behalf of the NDP, I would once again like to congratulate the hon. member for Nepean—Carleton. I hope the motion will be agreed to as soon as possible so that activities can be held on the first Sunday in June. We all want to be able, in our communities, to let members of our armed forces know that we support and celebrate them.

● (1815)

[*English*]

**Mrs. Elsie Wayne (Saint John, PC):** Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I rise to support the motion moved by my hon. colleague from Nepean—Carleton. I thank him very much for the work he has done. Coming on the heels of last week's tragedy in Kandahar, bringing forth a motion proclaiming the first Sunday in June Canadian forces day seems more timely than ever. Even before the events of last week recognition of our men and women in the armed forces is long overdue.

Kandahar served as a wake-up call to all Canadians to the threats and dangers that our armed forces personnel face every day. In recent years we have come to see war and conflict as something of a sanitized process, hoping that technology can prevent the overwhelming loss of human life like we saw in the two world wars. Where there is war and conflict, there is danger. As long as our armed forces personnel and indeed Canadians as a whole are willing to travel to all corners of the globe to protect the values we believe in and the lives of innocent civilians, we must recognize the risks involved.

*Private Members' Business*

I have been involved with the committee on defence and veterans affairs for nine years. I asked for those positions because to me they are the most important people in Canada. Not only do these men and women make tremendous sacrifices to defend our country and our ideals, but they do so knowing that one day their job could result in their death. For many of us it is hard to imagine such a line of work. It is a true testament to our armed forces personnel that they knowingly accept this risk for the good of our country.

Consider all the missions at home and abroad that have been mentioned here tonight that our Canadian soldiers have been involved in over the years. Canada rarely fails to answer the call when the United Nations comes forward looking for peacekeepers. Genuine Canadian troops have emerged from peacekeeping efforts, such as Roméo Dallaire in Rwanda and Lewis MacKenzie in the former Yugoslavia. These individuals were in the spotlight, but think of all the soldiers we did not hear about and who still had to witness the horrors that took place in those countries. Some of them still live to this day with the trauma of what they saw.

Canadian armed forces personnel are involved in key operations the world over as we speak. We have been focusing on Afghanistan and rightly so, but let us not forget our troops in the Balkans, the Golan Heights, Cyprus, Sierra Leone and the Congo, just to name a few. Let us also not forget that we have lost the lives of peacekeepers on a number of these missions in recent years. They were also Canadian heroes.

Let us not forget that our armed forces are also involved with DART, our disaster assistance response team, which was created in 1996 to be deployed in situations ranging from natural disasters to complex humanitarian emergencies. They have seen service in places like Haiti, Honduras and Turkey. These specially trained individuals are the finest examples of the military evolving to meet the challenges of our changing world where threats are not just of the military variety but also include earthquakes, floods, disease and hunger. We have seen that.

One of my fondest recollections of our armed forces personnel will always be the help they provided to the millions of Canadians who were hurt by the ice storm in 1998. Fourteen thousand troops, including 2,300 reserves, were deployed to help Canadians through one of the worst storms in our history. I have heard countless tales from constituents who were holed up in their homes during the storm, feeling cold and isolated, only to have one of our armed forces personnel show up at the door offering assistance.

There was the Manitoba flood. Our colleagues in Quebec suffered through the Saguenay flood. For both of those disasters our military people were there. I say to my hon. colleagues here and to all the members on the defence committee that it is very important for us to make sure that we give our troops all of the equipment they need to do their job.

● (1820)

Today we had the debate on our submarines which are used. The Sea Kings need to be replaced and I know that it has been mentioned before as well.

All of us on both sides of the House have to work to put the money back into the budget for those men and women because they

cannot come to the Hill and protest. They are looking to everyone of us who sit in the House to speak up. They want to do the job for us.

There is something else that I want to see along with the special armed forces day. Because we have such a proud military history, we owe it to ourselves to continue this legacy. I would hope that as part of the armed forces day we would make a concerted effort to educate young people of today about the past achievements of the Canadian military together with its current successes.

Study after study show that Canadians, and in particular our youth, have very little knowledge of our military history. I would suggest to hon. colleague from Nepean—Carleton that every effort be made in our schools and communities to educate young Canadians about Canada's past and to instill in them a sense of pride on this very special first Sunday in June, our armed forces day.

I would also like to ensure that special recognition is given to the families of our military personnel on armed forces day. The husbands, wives, sons, daughters, parents and grandparents of our military personnel make incredible sacrifices as well. I know that through my brothers who served in the second world war. They have to suffer the worry when our troops go abroad and the loneliness of missed loved ones. They often move from base to base not getting a chance to develop roots in any particular area. Worst of all, when our troops are abroad, they live with the fear of getting a knock on the door in the middle of the night to receive news of injury or death, just like some did just recently because of what happened in Afghanistan.

I thank my hon. colleague for bringing this forward, but we have a job to do to carry it through. We have to ensure that we look after our military men and women and their families. We have to ensure that we teach our young people in the school system so when they become our age they will remember the efforts of our military and on armed forces day honour those individuals.

I would like to remind my hon. colleague that while this is a worthwhile symbolic move, we all have to address the challenges facing our military men and women. We have to help them do their job as best as possible and provide them the best equipment, resources and support. Canada will join a long list of countries that have already proclaimed an armed forces day. For a country with as proud a military as ours in Canada, this is long overdue.

Military recruiters say there is no life like it. That could not be more true. Such a lifestyle requires special individuals and Canada certainly has a host of them in the armed forces. I am honoured and pleased to support the motion to help recognize the achievement of Canada's military. I call on all Canadians to join in celebrating Canada's armed forces on the first Sunday in June. We have a lot of which to be proud.

● (1825)

**Mr. David Pratt:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. First, I thank all hon. members for their comments which I am sure were very heartfelt. At this point, I ask for the unanimous consent of the House to adopt the motion on Canadian forces day today.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair):** Is there unanimous consent?



*Private Members' Business*

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

**Mr. Jason Kenney:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I did not consent but I would be delighted to grant consent. Let me say that I have twice sought consent to deem votable my private member's bill to promote the observance of two minutes of silence on Remembrance Day, which has been supported by 60,000 petition signatures and every veterans group in the country. If the hon. member opposite would consent to make my bill votable, I would be glad to reciprocate.

Therefore, I seek unanimous consent to restore to the order of precedence and deem votable Bill C-297, an act to promote the observance of two minutes of silence on Remembrance Day.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair):** Is there unanimous consent?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair):** The time provided for the consideration of private members' business has now expired and the order is dropped to the bottom of the order of precedence on the order paper.

It being 6.30 p.m., the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 6.30 p.m.)

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