



CANADA

# House of Commons Debates

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OFFICIAL REPORT  
(HANSARD)

**Thursday, October 3, 2002**

—

**Speaker: The Honourable Peter Milliken**

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# HOUSE OF COMMONS

Thursday, October 3, 2002

The House met at 10 a.m.

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*Prayers*

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## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

• (1000)

[*English*]

### OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

**The Speaker:** Pursuant to section 66 of the Official Languages Act I have the honour to lay upon the table the annual report of the Commissioner of Official Languages covering the period from April 1, 2001 to March 31, 2002.

[*Translation*]

Pursuant to standing order 108(4)a), this report is deemed permanently referred to the Standing Joint Committee on Official Languages.

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[*English*]

### COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

#### FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE

**Mr. Pat O'Brien (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for International Trade, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 32(2) I am pleased to table, in both official languages, the government's response to the report of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade entitled "Building an Effective New Round of WTO Negotiations: Key Issues for Canada".

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### COPYRIGHT ACT

**Mr. Geoff Regan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 32(2) I have the honour to table, in both official languages, on behalf of the Minister of Industry, the report on the review of the provisions and operation of the Copyright Act entitled "Supporting Culture and Innovation: Report on the Provisions and Operation of the Copyright Act".

• (1005)

### GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

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

\* \* \*

### YUKON ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC ASSESSMENT ACT

**Hon. Robert Nault (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Lib.)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-2, an act to establish a process for assessing the environmental and socio-economic effects of certain activities in Yukon.

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

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### CANADA PENSION PLAN

**Hon. Don Boudria (for the Minister of Finance)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-3, an act to amend the Canada Pension Plan and the Canada Pension Plan Investment Board Act.

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

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### NUCLEAR SAFETY AND CONTROL ACT

**Hon. Don Boudria (for the Minister of Natural Resources)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-4, an act to amend the Nuclear Safety and Control Act.

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

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### PETITIONS

#### CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

**Mr. Geoff Regan (Halifax West):** Mr. Speaker, I have two petitions to table from people in my riding. The petitioners wish to draw the attention of the House that the creation and use of child pornography is condemned by the clear majority of Canadians.

The petitioners call upon Parliament to protect our children by taking all the necessary steps to ensure that all materials that promote or glorify pedophilia or sado-masochistic activities involving children are outlawed.

*Points of Order*

## STEM CELL RESEARCH

**Mr. Darrel Stinson (Okanagan—Shuswap, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present a petition on behalf of my constituents calling upon Parliament to focus its legislative support on adult stem cell research rather than embryonic stem cell research.

## GASOLINE ADDITIVES

**Mrs. Rose-Marie Ur (Lambton—Kent—Middlesex, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36 I wish to present a petition on behalf of the constituents of Lambton—Kent—Middlesex calling upon Parliament to protect the health of seniors and children, and save our environment by banning the disputed gas additive MMT, as it creates smog and enhanced global warming.

## CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

**Mrs. Rose-Marie Ur (Lambton—Kent—Middlesex, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the second petition I wish to present calls upon Parliament to protect our children by taking all necessary steps to ensure that all materials which provide or glorify pedophilia involving children are outlawed.

## IRAQ

**Mr. Peter Adams (Peterborough, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise to present a petition from citizens of the Peterborough area who are opposed to a war with Iraq. They mourn the deaths of the up to 3,000 people that resulted from the attacks on the cities of New York and Washington and share the grief and trauma of the family and friends of the victims.

The petitioners call upon the Parliament of Canada to refuse to cooperate in any way in a war against Iraq and to use Canada's diplomatic efforts to convince the United States, Britain and the United Nations to choose the tools of diplomacy and not the weapons of war for establishing peace in the Middle East. They further call for the lifting of all but military sanctions against Iraq.

\* \* \*

## QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

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

**The Speaker:** Is that agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

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## POINTS OF ORDER

## GOVERNMENT BUSINESS NO. 2

**Mrs. Carol Skelton (Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order with regard to a motion on the Order Paper, Motion No. 2, in the name of the Minister of State and the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons.

The motion contains four separate and distinct parts, each capable of standing on its own. I raise the matter because these four unrelated parts make it impossible for members to debate and cast their votes responsibly and intelligently.

The four separate parts deal with: first, reinstating evidence from the last session with regard to committee work; second, establishing and reinstating procedure for government bills; third, establishing a special committee on the non-medical use of drugs; and fourth, authorizing the Standing Committee on Finance to travel in relation to its pre-budget consultations.

In the throne speech the government announced that Bill C-5, species at risk, would be reinstated. My party is against the reinstatement of Bill C-5. Therefore I must oppose the motion.

However, there is another part of that motion that establishes the special committee on non-medical use of drugs. The committee is a result of a Canadian Alliance opposition motion that passed unanimously in the House in the first session, a motion sponsored by the member for Langley—Abbotsford. We are obviously not against that part of the motion. It is an important issue and I understand that the committee is ready to report when reconstituted. There is great interest in its findings.

Another part of the motion allows for the finance committee to travel for pre-budget consultations. Some members may be for this part or against it. Perhaps there may be a temptation for a member to include it in instructions to the committee or offer, through amendment, more details about its travels.

The motion also includes a separate section regarding the evidence of committees in the first session. Since every committee can decide that for themselves I am not sure why it is necessary to have this put to the House but perhaps we can listen to debate and discover the rationale for its inclusion.

On page 478 of Marleau and Montpetit it states:

When a complicated motion comes before the House... the Speaker has the authority to modify it and thereby facilitate decision-making for the House. When any Member objects to a motion that contains two or more distinct propositions, he or she may request that the motion be divided and that each proposition be debated and voted on separately.

At pages 427 to 431 of the Journals of 1964 there is a Speaker's ruling regarding the authority of the Chair to divide a motion. At page 431 the Speaker, after a lengthy historical report on the issue of dividing motions, concluded:

I must come to the conclusion that the motion before the House contains two propositions and since strong objections have been made to the effect that these two propositions should not be considered together, it is my duty to divide them—

In examining the nature of the two propositions from 1964 I have concluded that Motion No. 2 should be divided into four separate motions.

Another ruling you may want to consider, Mr. Speaker, is from April 10, 1991. The opposition objected to a government motion because it contained 64 separate proposals. The Speaker confirmed, at page 19312 of *Hansard* from April 10, 1991, that "the Speaker has the authority to divide complicated questions".

We argue that Motion No. 2 be divided into four separate motions because the motion does four different things with two decisions associated with yea or nay. For example, a member may agree with one and be against two, three and four, or agree with one and two and disagree with three and four, or agree with two and be against one, three and four, et cetera.

The potential number of outcomes is 16. We would need to allow 16 different amendments to deal with various deletion combinations to solve the problem. Further, the issue of amending the different parts of the motion to make it more suitable or to offer an alternative adds to the dilemma. The number of amendments necessary to solve the problem is astronomical. It is clear that Motion No. 2 in its present form is out of order and unacceptable.

• (1010)

The items contained in it require separate votes, separate amendments and separate debate to solicit support for those amendments to convince members to vote for or against. Of course, the government forgets that Parliament is about debate.

It might help the Chair and the public watching to get an understanding as to why this motion is before the House and why it is before the House in this unusual form.

The government is once again attempting to manipulate the rules of Parliament to abuse the rights of all members because of its deep divisions in the Liberal Party. It is clear that this manoeuvre would avoid potential prime ministerial embarrassment of having Liberal backbenchers voting against the reinstatement of Bill C-5 and Bill C-15B by lumping into one package the important issue of non-medical use of drugs and prebudget consultation with Bill C-5 and Bill C-15B. The Prime Minister is gambling that Liberal backbenchers will hold their noses and vote for the whole package rather than see the work of the special committee on the non-medical use of drugs be for naught and scuttle prebudget consultations.

If this motion is allowed to stand as is, members will be forced to vote for the reinstatement of Bill C-5 and Bill C-15B to ensure prebudget consultations and to save the good work of the special committee. This motion is wrong procedurally and is wrong ethically.

The original motion proposed to House leaders had in it a part that replaced the lost supply day. The supply day was lost because the government decided to prorogue which extended the summer break by two weeks. It was not the opposition decision so it made sense to give that supply day back.

Perhaps we could separate the reinstatement part from the rest of the items, put back the part about the additional supply day and then we could avoid debating all four motions separately. That would be the sensible thing.

• (1015)

**Mr. Geoff Regan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, with all due respect I cannot share the view of my colleague on this matter or the petition of her party because in fact the question really is whether or not the motion encompasses one principle.

### *Points of Order*

The motion says at the outset "In order to provide for the resumption and continuation of the business of the House". That is what this is about. We want to carry on with the work we have done. We have had debate on these issues before and on all these matters, these motions and bills. That is valuable.

The question is do we want to continue with the work of the House. That is the principle here. They are all encompassed in that. I would think that members would want to have the House's work go on and not want to engage in attempts to derail this work.

That is the point of the motion. It encompasses one principle and therefore I would argue is permissible.

**Mr. Chuck Strahl (Fraser Valley, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I do not want to engage in a debate on this but it is important to note that the business of the House goes on uninterrupted until prorogation. The reason we have prorogation, at least one of the reasons from the government side, is that it is a fresh start. It is supposedly a chance for the government to come forward with a new agenda, a new plan, some new ideas and something to galvanize the nation. We are going to debate today whether that happened or not and we will get to that shortly.

However as far as the business of the House, the House leader's argument on the Liberal side that they just want to continue with business as usual is the antithesis of that.

The government decided that the business of the House had to stop, that it had to prorogue, clean the tables and start anew with new committees, new agendas and a whole new legislative package. For him say that all the business they want on the Liberal side has to also continue uninterrupted is simply false.

Prorogation stops some things and until the House agrees, it cannot continue as if nothing happened. Prorogation requires the decision of this House, if we are going to continue with an old agenda, a decision that each of us as parliamentarians has to be willing to take part in and vote on.

As our House leader has pointed out, there are four separate issues at stake and we cannot, on both sides of the House, say the government has now decided, in an omnibus motion, to move forward with the parts it likes and drop the rest. What if there are parts that I like or another member might like? We do not have the privilege that the government is choosing right now of being selective.

It should be divided. If the government is insistent, it will vote them through, and so be it. However in the meantime, I would argue and hope, Mr. Speaker, that you would see the wisdom of allowing all of us to decide on the merits of each of the four separate issues and whether they should go ahead. The House will decide. If the House decides to move forward, then prorogation means that those issues are carried forward. However it does not give the Liberals, I would hope, blanket permission to pick and choose the items that they like and leave the rest of it to be swept into the garbage can.

*The Address*

**Mr. Leon Benoit (Lakeland, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, the government has been making some comments and suggestions lately that it would like to make the House truly democratic. I would suggest that this is an opportunity for the government to demonstrate that it is serious about trying to make the House democratic by dividing this motion so that members in the House can vote on each motion separately. The current motion does not allow that.

• (1020)

**The Speaker:** I would remind hon. members that this is a point of order. The Chair is looking for assistance in making a decision on the point, rather than debating points on the merits of dividing the motion for procedural assistance.

I assume that the hon. member for Prince George—Bulkley Valley will provide that kind of assistance now.

**Mr. Richard Harris (Prince George—Bulkley Valley, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I am sure that as part of your deliberation you will certainly want to weigh the motives of why the government would put different motions together in somewhat of an omnibus bill. As you know, this practice has been carried on by not only the Liberal government on a regular basis but also its predecessors in the Tory party. They put motions that are mostly distasteful to even their own members, and certainly the opposition, together with motions that are purely acceptable by their own members and the opposition in such a way that it forces the opposition and its own members away from a democratic vote on whether they like the motion or not and forces them to vote for one bill which contains both the distasteful and the acceptable motions.

This is the motive behind it. It has been demonstrated clearly by this party and the Tories before it on many occasions. I would submit, Mr. Speaker, that you have to consider whether this is a democratic thing to do; to take the right away from members on both sides who oppose certain motions in an omnibus bill by forbidding them to vote individually on those motions. I believe that the government's motives behind a bill like this has to be considered as you make your deliberation.

**The Speaker:** I appreciate the assistance offered by hon. members who participated in the discussion. I am not sure that motives are something that the Chair wants to get into particularly. I am more concerned about the procedural aspects of the motion and whether it meets the requirements of our practice and Standing Orders.

However I will take the arguments under advisement, consider the matter and get back to the House at an early opportunity with a ruling on this point in respect of the acceptability, or divisibility or whatever of the motion that is on the Notice Paper at this time. I thank again hon. members for their intervention.

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## SPEECH FROM THE THRONE

[*Translation*]

### RESUMPTION OF DEBATE ON ADDRESS IN REPLY

The House resumed consideration of the motion for an address to Her Excellency the Governor General in reply to her speech at the opening of the session, and of the amendment.

**Mrs. Suzanne Tremblay (Rimouski—Neigette-et-la Mitis, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I think you will need to keep the name of my riding in mind in future. Having not used it for a long time, it is perfectly understandable that you have lost sight of it, but I think you will remember it in future.

I am very pleased to be able to speak within this debate on the address in response to the Speech from the Throne, which was delivered on Monday afternoon. I have heard a number of these speeches since coming here, but this was really the one I had the greatest hope for, and unfortunately the one that has been the greatest disappointment to me. I was expecting a throne speech with some perspective for Canada's future, one in which we would see what future policies would be, how we could move forward in the 21st century with as much harmony as possible and how we could solve the problems facing us.

I must admit, however, that of all the throne speeches we have had to date, this is the weakest I have ever had occasion to read.

I would like to begin with several points that, on first reading, strike me as positive. It is, however, very obvious that we will have to wait for the concrete measures arising out of the fine words we heard when the speech was read. One of these points is ratification of the Kyoto protocol.

The Prime Minister has promised that a resolution would be tabled in the House. We will have a debate on the Kyoto protocol, and it appears that we will be able to vote on this resolution, to honour the commitments we made regarding the Kyoto accord. However, since the beginning of the session, we have already noticed that this issue seems to be creating problems within cabinet itself. So, even though we view this as a rather positive step, we have concerns: what will the apparent dissension in cabinet lead to?

Considering the Minister of Health's election results, the province she lives in and the position of the government in her province, whose premier said he is even prepared to separate from Canada if the Kyoto protocol is implemented, I can understand why she is trying her best, first to save her seat, second to ensure that her province does not separate, and third to play for time on the Kyoto accord. This is the first thing.

Another concern about Kyoto is the fact that the protocol will be implemented over a 10-year period. We wonder to what extent all the efforts that have been made by Quebec, for example, over the past 10 years will be taken into consideration when the time comes to define everyone's share of the burden. We will also have to see to what extent we will truly be able to allocate the necessary funds to fully implement Kyoto. Will the Prime Minister's successor decide to change things and postpone its implementation? These are some of the questions that we have, even though we believe the ratification of the Kyoto protocol is a very good idea.

There is a second point that I found interesting in the announcements made by the Prime Minister, particularly in the speech that he delivered the day after the Speech from the Throne. He said he would double Canada's aid to developing and poor countries, particularly in Africa. As such, this is good news. However, there is a catch.

*The Address*

●(1025)

The pledge that we made was to invest 0.7% of our GDP. Even if we were to double the amount invested this year, we would still be very far from the real commitment that we made.

We would still be at less than half of what we promised, to invest 0.7% of GDP. Even by doubling the current levels, we would still not catch up to the 1993 levels of aid to developing countries. Ours is a country that is rich, that wants to do so much and that wants to share. Even the Prime Minister said that he felt there could be a link between terrorism and poverty; and if this link can be established, then it seems to me that we should invest more in poor countries in order to help them help themselves.

There was also an announcement that there would be a review of our policies on defence and international affairs. What was strange about the announcement, about the way it was expressed in the Speech from the Throne, is that it would have been preferable to hear that we would first establish our policy in foreign affairs, and then decide what to do for defence.

If we establish defence policy first and foreign policy second, it is like putting the horse before the cart. I think that the government should first decide on our foreign policy before dealing with defence and military policy.

This is obvious to us every day, as we read what forces members tell us; as an army, we do not look well equipped. We do not have enough men. We do not have enough money. We do not have enough weapons, and we do not have enough equipment. It would therefore be extremely difficult to think that we could do something with our army if we had to establish our defence policy ahead of our foreign policy. I think it would be wiser to do the opposite and then see, looking at our needs at home and the needs of poorer nations. The army can wait, because I do not think that we are going to make the world a better place by fighting wars.

Of course, the constructive measures announced in this throne speech include some to raise aboriginals' standard of living. Once again, this is very disappointing, because it is taken almost word for word from the 2001 throne speech.

The final good piece of news is that we are apparently going to be asked to consider decriminalizing pot. This will probably be quite an interesting discussion. It is legislation that would probably reassure many people, given the pointlessness of criminalizing something that is extremely important for some and insignificant for others. It would help ease the backlog of court cases.

Now let us take a look at the troubling aspects of the throne speech. Once again, I am referring to all the jurisdictional intrusion that is in store for us. From the beginning, the government of the member for Saint-Maurice has persistently intruded whenever possible, and it would seem on purpose sometimes, into provincial jurisdictions.

●(1030)

Sometimes it would seem that it deliberately intrudes into areas of provincial jurisdiction, so that it can then turn around and hold federal-provincial conferences, try to settle the differences, and have a policy of confrontation rather than a true policy of partnership.

Although the speech contains the term partnership, it is easily seen that this is just a word, and not a concept that is truly part of the profound philosophy of the person who leads the government. His is an attitude of belligerency, of picking fights, looking for confrontation, rather than one of looking for any real partnership. This is rather a pity, because he could have, after all this time as Prime Minister, finished his political career on a rather positive note.

Once again, we have a prime minister who will be remembered, as was his mentor, as someone who wanted to put Quebec in its place, who has succeeded in impoverishing his home province even further, leaving it in a worse situation than it was when he took over.

Another aspect totally ignored by the throne speech is the famous fiscal imbalance. Mr. Dion does have, I acknowledge, much knowledge in certain areas of his speciality, that is political science.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair):** Order, please. I remind everyone that members are referred to by the names of their committees or their positions.

**Mrs. Suzanne Tremblay:** Mr. Speaker, the member for Saint-Laurent—Cartierville and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs does not seem to be very good in economics.

Mr. Martin, who proved that he was able to administer a budget, recognized that there was a fiscal imbalance.

●(1035)

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair):** Order, please. The hon. member has been in the House for a long time, and two slips in a row is a bit much.

**Mrs. Suzanne Tremblay:** Mr. Speaker, I am terribly sorry. I seem to have lost the hang of it, because I have not been around for six months now. I was trying to refer to the member who cannot be referred to as a backbench member, because he is in the front row, the hon. member for LaSalle—Émard. Everyone knows who I am talking about: the former Minister of Finance in the government of the hon. member for Saint-Maurice. There you go, I got it all right this time, Mr. Speaker. Thankfully, no one ever died from embarrassment.

The member in question said that there was a fiscal imbalance when one level of government has more revenues than another, and when one has less spending.

Clearly, when one government has the revenues, and the other level of government has to do the spending, you do not have to be Einstein—and I know for a fact that there are no members here with that name, so I am safe—to understand that this means that there is a fiscal imbalance.

When the hon. member for Saint-Laurent—Cartierville says that there is no fiscal imbalance, it seems to me that he should redo his economics 101 course in order to understand; this is a very basic concept.

*The Address*

There is a consensus in Quebec on this issue. This consensus is now spreading to all the provinces. There is a huge fiscal imbalance between the federal government and the provincial and territorial governments. The federal government is collecting too much money in taxes, considering its expenditures and responsibilities. It arbitrarily made cuts and now it is reluctant to go back to the levels that existed before these cuts were made, in 1994 and 1995. This is a serious mistake.

This government is also making another big mistake, but it may be able to correct things. I am referring to the infamous parental leave. While the government is providing a child tax benefit to help poor children, if there are poor children, it means that there are poor families. If we do not help poor families, we will never achieve our objectives, even if we have measures that specifically target poor children.

Yesterday evening, I read an article saying that the United Nations recognized that, in a way, the lack of concern of rich governments was the reason why we were losing the battle against poverty. Poverty is on the rise, and there is an increasing number of poor children and families. The government came up with a parental leave that is tied to the employment insurance program, as if working women were the only ones with children.

What about all the women who do not qualify for employment insurance and who also have babies, take leave and get poorer because they do not qualify for the parental leave designed by the federal government? I wonder when the minister will understand. I wonder when the government will understand.

I have here a clipping from yesterday's paper, which reads "After the budget deficit...". I cannot quote the article verbatim, because it refers to the Prime Minister by name. The article says that the Prime Minister "wants to eliminate social deficits".

One way to eliminate one of the social deficits in Quebec is to change his policy on parental leave. This is parental leave that is all wrong. Nobody—well, not many people take it. I should not say nobody, because some people do. However, everyone I met who was eligible told me "Mrs. Tremblay, I cannot afford to take parental leave. I simply cannot afford to receive only 55% of my salary for a year. We would probably lose our home".

• (1040)

Some people might not be able to keep up with the mortgage payments on their house because their income has dropped. This government has to get it into its head that this parental leave is not good enough. If the Prime Minister really wants to do something, he should look at parental leave.

Another thing he should look at is employment insurance for seasonal workers. It is not the workers who are seasonal, but the jobs. It is the work that is seasonal. If the minister could also understand this—I do not think it is a difficult thing to understand—that it is our work which is seasonal, appropriate measures will be taken and there will be an end to the discrimination against so-called seasonal workers.

There is another consensus in Quebec which the government is doing absolutely nothing about, and when we hear the answers from the Minister for International Trade, we could die laughing, if

something this terrible were funny. I am talking about softwood lumber. How many times have we won our case before the WTO tribunal? How many times have our businesses been cheated?

Before my leave, I myself rose in the House to ask the minister to do something about the problem, to tell him that it was urgent, that the agreement was about to expire. The problem is still not sorted out. The deal he cut is even worse than what we had before.

I see that my time is up. I had much more to say and I hope that we will have a chance to come back to this in other debates.

**Mrs. Marlene Jennings (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for International Cooperation, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to welcome our colleague from Rimouski-Neigette-et-la Mitis back to the House. I am quite sincere in saying that we all missed her.

The hon. member has spoken of consensus within Quebec. As the hon. member is aware, I too am a Quebecker. You have, inadvertently perhaps, neglected to mention that, when speaking of our future, the most important thing is the consensus of the Quebecers who do not want Quebec to separate from Canada. They do not want to see another referendum on the question of an independent Quebec.

This, I feel, goes above and beyond all the other consensuses to which you have referred, whether they exist in reality or not, because it is the basis upon which the whole future of Quebec will be decided, and the one which will be responsible for its progress and development.

**Mrs. Suzanne Tremblay:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Rimouski-Neigette-et-la Mitis for her welcoming message. I am absolutely delighted to be back here and I am in fighting shape, let me warn you.

The hon. member refers to consensus. My view of a consensus is a lot broader than hers. When 49% of the population wants something and 51% wants something else, we are far from consensus. This is very nearly the majority of 50% plus one, a majority with which we are enormously pleased and one which we defend.

We are far from having a consensus in Quebec as far as our future is concerned. Quebecers still say, at least 46% of them, according to the latest survey, that they are in favour of having our own country one day.

The young man who seems to be an up and comer in Quebec and appears to have some chance of being in a position of power some day, himself said in 1995 that there would be no referendum for ten years. So that means 2005, three years from now. The deadline the premier of Quebec has set is for us to have our own country when we sit down and negotiate the conditions for the FTAA for ourselves. We will have our own country.



*The Address*

•(1045)

[English]

**Mr. Richard Harris (Prince George—Bulkley Valley, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I listened to the member's comments both here and in the opposition lobby. What is her opinion and the opinion of her party on the subject of how the government recognizes a crisis or concerns that could be termed, in their minds, as regional? I want to speak in particular to the softwood lumber issue.

The government has always claimed to be a national government caring about every part of the country, but in the throne speech, considering we have such a huge crisis in the softwood lumber industry, one would have thought that in recognition of other parts of the country outside the Ottawa area and their local concerns the government would have shown in some way that it cares about crises that are happening outside of its domain here in Ontario. The financial aid package that it is talking about, about \$300 million, really is a token amount which, in my opinion, demonstrates clearly its token concern for the softwood lumber crisis.

Does the member and her party get the feeling that the Liberals live in sort of a vacuum when it comes to concerns that are in other parts of the country, such as the softwood lumber industry?

[Translation]

**Mrs. Suzanne Tremblay:** Mr. Speaker, since 1993, I have often heard this government say that it wants to connect everyone—it wants us to be connected to a highway—so that we are all connected with one another. However, I have never seen a government so disconnected from the needs of the regions, whether it is softwood lumber or air transportation.

If another scandal surfaces, it will be in air transportation. The government gave Air Canada a monopoly. What did Air Canada do? It announced that, on October 6, I will no longer be able to fly to Ottawa. I will have to hitchhike to get here. The hon. member for Gaspé will also no longer be able to fly home. He will no longer be able to fly from the Magdalen Islands and stop in Mont-Joli, if he wishes to do so. Everything is going to Montreal. It is a disgrace that the government should care so little about the regions.

As for softwood lumber, the fact that this issue is still not settled is a disgrace. This is an urgent matter. It is a critical issue for many regions in the country. But the government is doing nothing. The minister responsible is smiling. He is sporting a fine suntan, and he gives us answers that do not lead to anything. This is unfortunate.

We could also mention agriculture, which is another critical issue in our country. The government is disconnected and is not even aware of the problem. The fact is that the Liberals are connected to Ottawa, they are connected to the Ontario highway. They know the Ontario highways, but that is it: as far as they are concerned, the rest of Canada can travel on dirt roads or whatever.

•(1050)

**Hon. Denis Coderre:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I do not want to interrupt the member for Rimouski-Neigette-et-la Mitis, but I just wanted to make a quick comment. There has been an announcement regarding highway 175. So, we are very sensitive to

issues affecting the regions, the Saguenay—Lac-Saint-Jean in particular.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair):** That is more of a piece of information than a point of order. The member for Rimouski-Neigette-et-la Mitis.

**Mrs. Suzanne Tremblay:** Mr. Speaker, in reply to my kind colleague, the member for Bourassa, I would say that, of course, there has been an announcement regarding highway 175. I am not impressed. What I want to see is trucks on the side of the highway, I want to see asphalt, I want to see the work being done. Unfortunately, in 20 years time, I will not be here to remind you that the work on highway 175 has yet to be done.

[English]

**Mr. Rex Barnes (Gander—Grand Falls, PC):** Mr. Speaker, I was listening with interest to the hon. member's speech with regard to the EI system. Of course that is not new for all of Canada but it is an issue that is hurting rural Newfoundland and rural Canada more so than the urban areas of Canada.

Would the hon. member elaborate on the EI system because there is always a big confusion with the EI system? The jobs are seasonal and not the workers. I wonder what she can relate to us with regard to what should have been in the speech that would—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair):** The hon. member for Rimouski-Neigette-et-la Mitis.

[Translation]

**Mrs. Suzanne Tremblay:** Mr. Speaker, the first thing that should have been done the Speech from the Throne was for the government to finally recognize that the problem is seasonal work, and not the workers.

Before, workers could work on a farm, fish, chop wood and do other things they wanted to do. Now, everything has become specialized. Now you need a card to do jobs. So, people are forced into one seasonal job. We should help make things easier for people, and if we are going to recognize the concept of seasonal work, then we should allow those who become prisoners to it to do other work.

[English]

**Mr. Peter Stoffer:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I beg the indulgence of the House. I think you would find that there is unanimous consent for me to introduce a private member's bill. I apologize to the House for not doing it earlier this morning.

May I seek unanimous consent to do that, Mr. Speaker?

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair):** Is there unanimous consent to return to introduction of private members' bills?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

*The Address***ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS**

[English]

**EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE ACT**

**Mr. Peter Stoffer (Sackville—Musquodoboit Valley—Eastern Shore, NDP)** moved for leave to introduce Bill 206, an act to amend the Employment Insurance Act (persons who leave employment to be care-givers to family members).

He said: Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. members of the House for unanimous consent. This is the third time that I have introduced this bill in the House of Commons.

Basically, the bill would provide financial help for people who give care to those who are terminally ill or under a palliative care situation.

In this country we have something called maternity leave. If somebody has a baby they can take a year off with maternity leave or paternity leave. However when someone is gravely ill or they are under a palliative care situation, we have nothing at the end of someone's life to provide for the caregiver in a financial or job protection way.

I thank the government for putting in the throne speech that it will seriously look at this issue. This private member's bill will assist the government greatly in speeding that resolution along.

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

**SPEECH FROM THE THRONE**

• (1055)

[English]

**RESUMPTION OF DEBATE ON ADDRESS IN REPLY**

The House resumed from October 2 consideration of the motion for an address to Her Excellency the Governor General in reply to her speech at the opening of the session, and of the amendment.

**Mr. Geoff Regan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to rise today to take part in the debate on the address in reply to the Speech from the Throne.

The Speech from the Throne, which was delivered by Her Excellency the Governor General on Monday, was entitled "The Canada We Want". I think it is fair to say that it reflects the wishes and hopes of the vast majority of Canadians and the direction that they want the government to take.

There are many positive commitments in the Speech from the Throne. I want to get into some of those in a moment.

Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the hon. member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine.

I want to put in context the situation in relation to the Speech from the Throne because it has a lot of very positive, progressive measures outlined in it, initiatives that we can look forward to seeing come

forward, but those would not be possible if we had not as a government taken the steps to fix our fiscal problems that we started with in 1993.

Let us go back to that time. If I had gone door-to-door campaigning saying we would eliminate the deficit and have five successive years of surpluses, people would have laughed at me. They would not have believed me. If we had suggested that Canada would create two million jobs by the year 2000, people would have laughed and said we were kidding, but in fact that is what happened.

The important point is that we came into office with a deficit, left behind by the previous government, of some \$42 billion. We had an enormous problem. Our interest rates were high. Unemployment was high. We had huge problems and a lot of them had to do with the situation of our country fiscally. We had a situation where more and more of the dollars that government received in revenue were going to pay interest on our enormous national debt.

The government had to deal with that problem because our ability to pay for everything else was in jeopardy. As more dollars go to interest we have less left for everything else. The government had to act to get our finances in order, to improve our interest rates, which resulted later from that, with an improved economy. We have come a long way since then.

Those actions to secure our fiscal ability to pay for the important programs we all believe in as Canadians were an essential precursor to what this Speech from Throne is all about. Those measures are the ones that now allow us not only to keep paying for the important programs we all believe in, such as health care, medicare and so forth, but also to look at new measures in relation to child poverty, for example, and the environment and so on.

So to begin with, it is important to remember that the government has committed in this budget not just to have new initiatives but also to maintain the very important fiscal discipline that Canadians expect of the government to maintain balanced budgets in the future. That is an essential point to keep in mind.

Let me mention as well that the government committed in the last budget and in the last election to the largest series of tax reductions in Canada's history with a \$100 billion five-year program of tax reductions. That program continues. Those tax reductions have already begun and we will see more of them over this period.

Let us then turn to some of these important initiatives, some important progressive commitments from the government in the Speech from the Throne.

The first one of course relates to health care. When we talk about health care, it is important not to look at just the issues that we are seeing more of, like the focus on preventative medicine, but to also look at the initiatives the government is taking in relation to child poverty or environmental issues and note how those things affect our overall health and in fact in the long term the cost of our health care system.

*The Address*

The fact that the government is moving in those areas is very important. It has agreed to be involved in modernizing our health care system. Of course we are all interested and anxiously awaiting the report of Mr. Romanow on the health care system. The government, in this Speech from the Throne, has committed to meet with the premiers, to have a first ministers conference early in the new year and to invest the necessary federal long-term capital required to keep the health care system sustainable. This is the Canada we want we are talking about and it seems to me that most Canadians strongly believe that our health care system must follow the five components of the Canada Health Act, in particular that it must remain universal and publicly administered. I think we hold that very strongly. I cannot agree with the comments of the Leader of the Opposition who argues that we should have much more of a privately managed health care system, when really what he is talking about is clearly a two-tier health care system in this country. It is very clear as to what the official opposition is in favour of.

● (1100)

Is the health care system in this country perfect? No, it is not. It needs improvement. It needs work, but the vast majority of the people I have talked to who use the health care system talk about what a good system we have, and I think and hope members will probably acknowledge that they find the same thing. They talk about well they are served in our hospitals and what a good job is done by the doctors, nurses and other health care workers in our system.

Are there waiting lists that are too long? We had better believe that there are. Are there some problems that have to be addressed? Indeed there are. Can the system be managed better? I think Canadians feel it can be managed better. Does it require more investment from Ottawa, from the federal government? I believe Canadians feel it does and it is important that we commit to those things, but let us have a long-term plan and let us do this in a cooperative manner. That is very important. I think that is what the Government of Canada intends to do.

Another area the government is committed to and has already been investing in is medical research. It is another important area for improving the health of Canadians. Canadians want that to happen.

I want to speak for a minute about the initiative or the commitment in the Speech from the Throne to support and deal with the issue of child poverty in this country. This is an issue which is of great concern to me and has been for many years. I recall that in my first term, before my involuntary sabbatical, as I like to call it, I was involved in a working group of our caucus on child poverty that worked toward the development of the child tax credit and the national child benefit. So I am very pleased to see that the government has committed to keep those measures going and to increase the amounts provided in them. I hope it will work with the provinces to ensure, for instance in my province of Nova Scotia, that the provincial governments stop clawing back those moneys from people who are on welfare.

Of course it is important that people who are trying to get off welfare get a hand up and they are getting that from this program. I used to talk about the poverty trap. People often have the problem that if they get off welfare it is costs them a lot. They lose various benefits. They lose dental plans and other kinds of benefits, which

keeps them trapped in poverty and makes it very hard for them to get out of welfare. The child tax benefit, particularly a national child benefit, helps those low-income families to get a start out of welfare, but that is not enough because not everyone can do that. Not every single-parent mother can get a job. It is important that the provinces provide decent benefits to those families so that those children can have a good head start in life.

That leads me to the early childhood initiative of the government which in the Speech from the Throne it committed to continuing and expanding. That is a very important initiative. When we talk about health care we know that very young children who have the nutrition they need in the first years of life have a much better chance of having healthy lives throughout the rest of their lives. It is those who so often lack that nutrition, who lack the proper nourishment in their early years, who are going to have major health care problems later, who are going to suffer because of it and who are going to be a burden in some way on the health care system. It is a burden we take on willingly. It is a burden that Canadians believe we should share and not leave only to those who can afford to pay for health care, but it remains a burden that we have to be cognizant of. We should take this kind of measure to prevent children from having problems with health for their whole lives.

I also want to speak about the government's initiative in the Speech from the Throne in relation to urban infrastructure. As a member of the urban issues task force of the government caucus, I have had a great interest in this. I certainly have had a great interest in the issues concerning the Halifax Harbour cleanup project. I am pleased that this may allow more funding for that program or for other important projects in urban areas, in Halifax and in areas across the country where it is much needed. We have to deal with some of the big problems we face in cities that are congested, that are having air quality problems, transit problems and other kinds of problems. That kind of investment in Canada, that 10-year program the government has committed to, will be of great benefit to the country, particularly in those areas that are the economic engines of our country.

I want to finish by saying that I would have liked to see a greater emphasis on defence. This is a great concern of mine. It is certainly a big concern in Halifax. I was disappointed that there was not more mention of spending on the military. I hope we will see more good news about that in the future. In particular I want to say that I hope the government will get moving quickly on the maritime helicopter program to replace the Sea Kings.

● (1105)

**Mr. Roy Bailey (Souris—Moose Mountain, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, a particular question has come to me and has not been raised before in the House. An honourable gentleman sent me the question in an e-mail to bring forward to the House and I will do so now. He said "The government I want is one that is open and truly accountable to Parliament and, more importantly, to all Canadians everywhere. No mention was made in the Speech from the Throne as to how the government will deal with its previous secrecy and spell out in detail how it will abandon the unethical practices of the present government".

*The Address*

I, too, thought about that because the past term was a term that created a lot of uncertainty across Canada, and this gentleman is stating a definite reason for being disappointed in not being included. How would the hon. member reply to this particular concern?

**Mr. Geoff Regan:** Mr. Speaker, I wish to thank the hon. member for his question. I think that Canadians do want their government to be open and accountable and I think it is important that government try to be open and accountable at all times. That is one of the reasons why this government a number of years ago changed the rules concerning the Auditor General, for example, when he could only report once a year. The Auditor General can now report four times a year, holding the government's feet to the fire even more often.

First I want to say that the Speech from the Throne is not generally where the details are spelled out, as the hon. member has said. It is where the broad-brush strokes of the policy directions of the government are given, but clearly the government has committed to bringing forward a code of ethics and bringing it to the House to discuss. That is not a matter of legislation. It is obviously a matter for the House and its own rules. It has also talked about electoral financing. Those are important measures relating to openness and accountability that the government and all of us will be looking at in the coming months. I look forward to taking part in those discussions.

**Mr. Svend Robinson (Burnaby—Douglas, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask a question of the hon. member for Halifax West with respect to the Speech from the Throne and his response to it in two particular areas.

One is the area of fairness and equity. I would like him to comment in that context on the recent draft proposal to significantly weaken the disability tax credit for people with disabilities in Canada. It is a shameful decision which would reverse a number of court decisions and which would in fact require that people with disabilities be cut off the disability tax credit as long as they are able to somehow get a fork from their plate to their mouth while in any meaningful way they may not be able to get food into their home at all. I want to ask the hon. member if he will, as part of this commitment to fairness he spoke about, make a commitment to fight against that outrageous proposal.

Second, will he call on his government and the Prime Minister to ratify the Kyoto accord clearly, without any weasel words, and specifically without any demand that we must get credit for—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair):** We also have to give the parliamentary secretary a chance to respond.

• (1110)

**Mr. Geoff Regan:** Mr. Speaker, I wish to thank the hon. member for his questions. They are certainly of interest to me.

He may not be aware that in the House I have already called upon the government to ratify Kyoto and that I strongly support the ratification of the protocol. I look forward to that happening before Christmas, as we have heard already. My support for that is well known, certainly in my riding of Halifax West. I would like to think that it is well known in the House, but perhaps it is not as well known as it might be.

On the question of the disability tax credit, there are two points I want to make. First, I think members would agree, generally speaking, that when we have measures it is important to make sure that the contributions we make go to those people who ought to receive them, who meet the criteria for a tax provision, for example, or whatever. That is the first point. The second key point is that I share the concern of the hon. member. I do not wish to see this measure restricted further and I would urge the government not to and in fact to try to make it more generous. We have to be concerned about Canadians with disabilities and try to assist them.

[Translation]

**Mrs. Marlene Jennings (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for International Cooperation, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, thank you for granting me this time.

I would like to begin by thanking the member for Halifax West for sharing his time with me. I would also like to thank the other members from both sides of the House for their comments on the Speech from the Throne. Some of them were very relevant and apropos.

[English]

It takes courage to admit that our country faces serious challenges in the coming years. One of those challenges has important ramifications both for our children and for ourselves. I am quite proud that our throne speech has tackled one of the most pressing problems confronting our great nation: the need to improve the skills and knowledge of our people.

The throne speech reconfirms our government's commitment to take action on this national priority. We know that equipping Canadians with the skills required in today's knowledge intensive economy is essential to our continued success as a society. I am equally proud of our track record in creating jobs and opportunities for Canadians since we first came back to power in 1993. I would like to remind the House that just last week the International Monetary Fund forecast that once again Canada will lead the G-7 nations in economic growth.

The facts speak for themselves. Since we were elected in 1993, 2.5 million more Canadians are working. Full time jobs have increased 21% and the employment rate has dropped from 11.3% to 7.5%. However, I do want to underline, that figure about unemployment can be misleading.

Unemployment rates among certain of our population are significantly higher. If we look for instance at our visible minority communities specifically in the urban centres where our communities are centred, such as Montreal, Toronto and other major urban metropolises, unemployment rates among young black Canadians under the age of 35 can rise up to 50%. This is unacceptable. That is why I am pleased with the throne speech which re-emphasizes and re-commits to the national priority of skills and learning for Canadians.

*The Address*

The reality is that Canadian workers, not just the unemployed but even those on the job, face considerable challenges today. This is a reflection of the fact that the 21st century economy increasingly revolves around skills and knowledge. Let me just cite a few statistics that can put this challenge into perspective and we will see why it is a national priority for the government to address this challenge.

Seventy per cent of the jobs created in Canada between 1990 and 2000 were in fundamentally technical occupations. By 2004, 70% of all new jobs in Canada will require some form of post-secondary education. Only 6% of these new jobs which will be created will go to those who have not completed high school.

Nearly eight million adult Canadians have low or very low literacy skills. More than 40% of our working age population does not have the minimum skills required, demanded, in our modern labour market. By 2011 immigration will account for all net labour force growth in our country. Half of the workers of 2015 are currently in the labour market. Millions of workers will require skills upgrading in order to keep pace with technological and workplace changes.

Also, by 2020 when baby boomers like myself will have retired, the Conference Board of Canada predicts a labour force shortage of almost one million workers.

**An hon. member:** You will never retire.

**Mrs. Marlene Jennings:** One of my colleagues has said that I will never retire. Actually, I will. I joined the over 50 club last year, so seniors issues have become a pressing priority for me. Make no mistake: Canada's economic growth and continued prosperity depends fundamentally on increasing the skills of our people, of all Canadians. Productivity is now built not on physical force or sweat labour, but on creativity, diversity and knowledge.

• (1115)

The talents and abilities that Canadian workers will bring to the job is what is going to make our Canadian companies more competitive globally. Those skills are also key to creating our own opportunities. Those skills will enable us in the future to overcome the impacts of layoffs, avert unemployment or improve our employment prospects as the economy changes.

Skills are important to people who are falling behind, in particular members of our visible minority communities, our immigrant population and our aboriginal people. Too many are seriously disadvantaged already in our labour force. The government has a commitment to address that challenge within the global challenge of a skills and knowledge based policy, program, or legislation.

Last February the government launched Knowledge Matters: Skills and Learning for Canadians, which is the human resources side of our Canadian innovation strategy. Knowledge Matters outlines the skills challenges Canada faces, sets out the government's commitment and proposes national goals and milestones. It details what we must do to ensure equality of opportunity and economic innovation to build a more competitive economy and a stronger society. It underscores that skills and learning must be a national effort.

All segments of society have a part to play. All segments of society have a right to earn and share in the benefits of that agenda. A learning society has to begin in early childhood making sure our children get the best start in life. As well, the school years have come to mean much more than simply high school completion. In the future, post-secondary learning and credentials will be essential but it will not end there. It will not end with a diploma, a certificate or a set of journeyman papers. It will need to continue throughout our working life, no matter what our current credentials or job descriptions are.

As well, our workforce is aging rapidly at the same time that we face rising skill requirements and skill shortages. As a result, adults who are already in the workforce will face and are facing challenges to their competency and their ability to be productive. We must provide the opportunities for them to learn while they earn. Workplaces need to join forces with formal learning institutions and with communities to provide seamless, connected, lifelong learning. We as a government have to provide the tools to allow them to do so.

It is with quite a bit of pride that I point to some solid directions in the Speech from the Throne that will help make this vision a reality and move Canada's innovation strategy forward. For instance, there will be a national summit on innovation and learning this fall. We have pledged to create the skills and learning architecture Canada needs. We will promote workplace learning and report to Canadians on what is working and what is not working. We will also refocus the youth employment strategy to boost opportunities for work and learning for people with disabilities. We will work with the provinces to remove barriers to participation in work and learning for people with disabilities and others.

There is a whole plethora of measures which will assist the government in implementing the innovation strategy, specifically the skills and knowledge matters agenda. I want to conclude by saying it is very important that the policy include and target specifically our visible minority communities, our immigrant population, aboriginals and disabled persons and that we address the issue of seniors in the workplace. That is crucial.

• (1120)

**Mr. Richard Harris (Prince George—Bulkley Valley, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I listened to the member talk about how the government sets national priorities in the management of this country. She talked about unemployment numbers being up in certain demographic areas of our country. I would like to remind her that unemployment is up significantly in the country's softwood lumber industry because it has not been addressed effectively and in a responsible fashion by the government.

*The Address*

The softwood lumber crisis has resulted from the historical disdain shown by the government and previous governments to people in western Canada. The resulting indifference that has been shown to this crisis is because of the historical disdain for people in western Canada in particular.

If the government talks about its concern for all people in all parts of Canada, when will it demonstrate the real concern for the parts of Canada where softwood lumber is the economic lifeline of the economy? Thousands of softwood lumber employees have been laid off because of the gross mismanagement by the government of the softwood lumber issue.

**Mrs. Marlene Jennings:** Mr. Speaker, the member should remember that there is a consensus among the softwood lumber industry, the unions, the workers and the provincial governments on the position that this government has taken with regard to the trade war on softwood lumber. That is the first thing. This is probably the first time consensus has existed.

I would also like to remind the member across the way that one thing is really important. Our government and our international trade minister are very sensitive to the fact that any aid package not violate international trade rules and regulations so that our challenges to the protectionist measures that have been taken in the United States do not further damage our industry.

Also, five years to achieve a historic consensus is not nothing. I know that the opposition does not wish to acknowledge that there is a consensus within Canada, within all sectors and all regions at the government level, within the unions and within the industry itself that the position our government has taken with regard to the softwood lumber trade dispute with the United States is the correct one. We will continue along that line because that is what Canadians, including the industry, have supported.

• (1125)

**Mr. Peter Stoffer (Sackville—Musquodoboit Valley—Eastern Shore, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, may I say on behalf of the NDP, I swear that the hon. member does not look a day over 30. I can assure her of that.

The member talked eloquently about seniors. I do not think that anybody in the House would reject any assistance for seniors, but we are still taxing seniors who bring in only \$15,000 a year. Why would seniors give taxes to the government when it turns around and wastes the money?

Here are three examples of the terrific waste of money: \$100 million for two Challenger jets to which the DND said no; \$900 million for a gun registry bill that was only supposed to cost \$85 million, and was a complete waste of money; and a new building which is going up on Parliament Hill for \$211 million when there is available space for lease all around us. Why should seniors who make minimum fixed incomes pay taxes to the government when it obviously squanders money?

**Mrs. Marlene Jennings:** Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for thinking I look so young.

The question the hon. member raised about seniors is really important. Notwithstanding where I was coming from in terms of my response to the throne speech and the role of seniors in our

workplace, there is a necessity to provide the ongoing, continuing learning and skills agenda so that seniors, if they so wish, can continue to be active members in the labour force. The issue the member raised about poverty among seniors is one which many of my colleagues on this side of the House and I share with the member and other colleagues on that side of the House.

**Mr. Larry Spencer (Regina—Lumsden—Lake Centre, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the hon. member for Nanaimo—Alberni.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair):** Order, please. Please obey the rule that the House leaders have reached not to have any devices that make any sounds in the House.

**Mr. Larry Spencer:** Mr. Speaker, I will try to do better in the future.

It is an honour to stand and reply to the Speech from the Throne. I want to come at it from a direction emphasizing the family.

The cornerstone of society in our great country of more than 31 million people is the family. I believe that government has been chipping away at this cornerstone and has fostered an environment where family and our society are eroded almost beyond repair.

It is in the family that we learn love. We do not hear that word in here very often. We hear the word tolerance but I would suggest that the family is there not to teach tolerance but in fact to teach love. Love goes far beyond a simple tolerance stature. One cannot be accused of not being tolerant as long as one has learned the essence of love.

Love by its very nature gives. It gives respect and it demands and commands respect. We would suggest that a family must be in place in order for our society to learn the very basic societal skill of love.

In the family we also learn respect: first, self-respect; second, respect for others; and then, as we learn self-respect and respect for others, we gradually, hopefully, will also learn respect for the law, the order and the structure contained within society.

The family becomes an extremely important building block. We say that so glibly so often and yet I think we find ourselves failing at the point of seeing that family strengthened. The throne speech actually contains precious little hope for Canadian families. What will we tell Canadian families when they ask what leadership the Liberal government is taking on behalf of families?

The government does not even seem to understand the need or the importance of the family. It does not even understand what marriage is or what the family is. The government has given little leadership to encourage the establishment of strong families.

A number of years ago the words were recorded that in North America certain groups devised a plan whereby they would begin to destroy the family, that they would see that the family unit was wiped out as it was then known until it was totally destroyed.

**An hon. member:** They're doing a good job.

**Mr. Larry Spencer:** They are doing a good job.

*The Address*

I am not suggesting that anyone in the House or in the government is a part of that plan or scheme except for the fact that it is such a grandiose, large thing that sometimes we get caught in these things without even knowing it.

This plan involved the educational system in North America where teachers were taught ways to bring down the family and the weaknesses or the reasons why a family should not exist. This is history and this is fact.

The government has given little leadership or no leadership to encourage married couples to stay together. It has given no leadership to encourage couples to grow their families or to provide financial benefits for spouses for instance who choose to stay at home rather than go out and work.

We would like to see the day when our governments would recognize that it is important for a parent to be a parent, for a parent to be able to stay at home and instill within those children the characteristics of love and respect, and go beyond tolerance. We find that hard to do if our families are so stressed and stretched that they have to go to work.

● (1130)

When one family on the block takes that responsibility very seriously and one parent chooses to stay home and raise the children, they are not recognized for that effort. We subsidize the parents next door who choose to rush off early in the morning, dump their kids at some day care, pick them up later in the day, take them back home and then have precious little time to spend with their very own children. We do not take care of families who want to take care of their own children.

Canadian families are crying out for their government to lead and not simply drift along in any direction that the wind may be blowing.

What about the great silent majority of people who are family oriented? What about the people who are struggling from day to day to make a go with families? We are doing little to help them.

The throne speech talks of fiscal success, but in my constituency I hear no talk of fiscal prosperity among struggling families. In fact, a woman came into my office last week with tears literally running to the floor. Because she was unable to care financially for her children her children were whisked away.

As the hon. member down the line mentioned a while ago, I too see seniors lamenting the fact that taxes are owed on their already meagre incomes. It is appalling that we tax these people to the level that we do.

I see people who have no money to buy groceries because the government has confiscated their GST cheques, their disability cheques or their tax refund cheques without any notice. I do not see the fiscal security that we are talking about.

We are on the verge of a spending binge to buy a lacy legacy for the Prime Minister. What do I mean by a lacy legacy? Well, lace looks good and it is very pretty but basically it is only good to look at. My mother once had a lace tablecloth that was pretty but if a glass of ice tea or milk was turned over on that tablecloth, it did not protect the table at all. It was full of holes. That lace tablecloth would not

stand up to everyday wear because it was not strong. It sort of reminds me of a certain throne speech. It is pretty, it is lacy but it will never stand up to the everyday wear and tear that we have.

I have much more to say about child protection, especially when this very government, even though it talked about it in the throne speech, voted against it along with the Bloc and the NDP earlier this year. Can we trust the government to do this when it has already voted no? I do not think so.

I would like to move an amendment at this time. I move:

That the amendment be amended by adding after the word "sovereignty" the following:

"reforming Parliament to address the problem of the concentration of power in the Prime Minister's Office".

● (1135)

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair):** I will take the subamendment under advisement and the Speaker will get back to the House.

**Mrs. Karen Redman (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, one of the joys of being a member in the House is listening to a diversity of views. I cannot help but react to some of the comments made by my hon. colleague.

We, as members in the House, are many things. One thing I am, beside being the member of Parliament for Kitchener Centre, is the mother of four children. I take some exception when I hear my colleague opposite talk about parents being parents and being allowed to be in the home.

Would my hon. colleague comment on the fact that there are parents who wear many hats today and the role of government should be to offer the best support and the most variety of choices to parents or families who choose to have children?

As a matter of fact, the bulk of the tax cuts that this government has brought in, through good fiscal management, have been targeted at these very families with children. The government realizes that its proper role is to afford choice to families and to look at the kind of support it can provide many to people in the community who happen to be mothers or people in the workforce who are looking after aging and ailing family members.

There are a couple of inaccuracies that I would also like to correct. The hon. colleague talked about a motion that was brought forward regarding child pornography. Clearly, no member in this House would defend child pornography. I would remind my hon. colleague that the offer was made for a slight word change and he could have had unanimous consent for that motion, but his party chose to play politics with a very important issue.

● (1140)

**Mr. Larry Spencer:** Mr. Speaker, the politics were being played on the other side. The Liberals wanted to gut the motion of anything that said anything, and that is why we refused to go that way. We wanted some definite action and some definite steps taken, and some of those are even mentioned in the throne speech. That is why I ask whether we can really trust this government to do that, because it voted against it then. That is a fact. That is in *Hansard* and it cannot be changed no matter what anyone wants to argue.

*The Address*

Yes, variety in sustaining families is very important and that is my exact point. My family had two incomes because that was the career choice of my wife and my family. However we were careful to do things that overrode that outside involvement. Many other families do as well. All I am saying is, let us encourage the families who do choose to stay home and be that parent rather than those who choose to do as I have done.

**Mr. Peter Stoffer (Sackville—Musquodoboit Valley—Eastern Shore, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, one of the major faults of the throne speech is the lack of real detail as to what the government's plan will be for medicare in the country. It keeps telling us to wait for the Romanow report. However there is one thing I would like to hear from the official opposition. What is its plan for the future of medicare in Canada?

**Mr. Larry Spencer:** Mr. Speaker, I cannot speak for my entire party but I can tell the member a couple of things.

One plan is that we would have reliable, dependable and predictable support from the federal government in a national health care scheme, perhaps moving at least back to the level of 1993 participation or even beyond.

I think this government would be understood to be taking health care more seriously if it even attempted to move to the point where it really began, which was fifty-fifty participation. I would like to see that done, as well as encouraging the efficiency of the system throughout.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair):** On the subamendment of the hon. member, I declare it to be in order.

**Mr. James Lunney (Nanaimo—Alberni, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be here today to respond on behalf of the citizens of Nanaimo—Alberni to the recent Speech from the Throne. I thank my colleague the hon. member for Regina—Lumsden—Lake Centre for sharing his time with me.

In parliamentary tradition the Speech from the Throne is supposed to serve as a landmark statement, a defining event which is purported to map out a government strategy and inspire the nation. I am afraid I will be expressing my disappointment in the way this tradition has been abused, altered and even corrupted.

When something is turned from its created purpose to such an extent that it is no longer able to fulfill what it once promised, it is corrupted and those who trusted in it are bound to be disappointed. It is a little like clouds and wind without rain during a drought or like a wet blanket on a cold night or perhaps like marriage vows that were cast aside.

The member from Regina—Lumsden just asked about the Speech from the Throne if we could really trust the government to fulfill the promises portrayed in the speech. Is it any wonder that recycled throne speech rhetoric is met with cynicism when hardly 25% of yesteryear's promises since 1993 have been realized and other promises like removing the GST have been conveniently forgotten, gone with the wind.

The Prime Minister in his remarks to the House about the throne speech stated, and I quote from *Hansard*:

Trade and investment have been keys to the prosperity we enjoy. We are working very hard to prepare for the next round of multilateral trade negotiations. We are also working to resolve issues such as softwood lumber.

The government had five years to prepare for the end of the softwood lumber agreement, but when March 31, 2001 arrived the government's response was to wait and see what the Americans would do. What the Americans do? They imposed a 30% combined countervail and anti-dumping duty. Now, after 18 months of wind and rhetoric we still have a tariff wall of 27.2% that is killing our forest industry.

While B.C. Premier Gordon Campbell and his forest minister go alone to the United States, the federal government response is to litigate through WTO and NAFTA, processes which will take years of appeals and delays while the government waits to see. While our industry is being brutalized, wait and see is just not good enough. It would have been helpful to hear in the Speech from the Throne that cabinet would step forward with the \$400 million needed to finance the loans that would keep the mills open while this dispute continues.

While the Prime Minister considers the next round of multilateral trade talks, let me discuss realities for workers on Vancouver Island and in coastal British Columbia. On Friday, which is tomorrow, the Somass mill will close for four weeks. That will take out 200 workers. Because of the Somass closure, three other feeder mills will close: Coulson Forest Products, Franklin Forest Products and Naagard Sawmills Ltd. will close. That is another 300 jobs. This is a community of 18,000 that is being dismantled by the greed of the U.S. lumber barons.

With congressional elections pending in November, we are not likely to see action from Washington before then. While U.S. trade representative Robert Zoellick tells our premier he is willing to work with us, Canadians are left to wonder why the federal government has nothing better to offer than wait and see.

It is little comfort to my neighbours who work at the Nanoose Mill of Doman Industries. It is already closed. That is 65 workers laid off. The Chemainus Mill just laid off 45 more. On the coast 14 mills have reduced shifts or indefinite closures. That is 15,000 workers in B.C. as estimated in the *Vancouver Sun* on October 1.

People in my riding would like to know how the government can provide over \$1 billion of Canadian taxpayer dollars through the EDC for Montreal based Bombardier to build a high speed train in the U.S. for U.S. infrastructure but turn down a \$400 million package that would have kept our mills open while this dispute goes on.



*The Address*

It gets worse. The MacDonald mill in Fort Langley just announced last week that it will close and move south of the border to Sumas, Washington. That is 56 Canadian jobs. The tariff was costing the company \$800,000 a month. That is \$10 million a year. Interfor executive Duncan Davies stated that by shifting the plant to the U.S. Interfor could eliminate crippling duties and take advantage of other efficiencies.

Kyoto proponents should take note. Sumas, Washington, a tiny U.S. border town that will now receive the new mill and the Canadian jobs, is the same town where two gas powered electrical generating stations are under construction. Meanwhile, residents of the Fraser Valley are concerned that tons of particulate pollutants will blow into the smog smitten, high population Canadian side of the border.

• (1145)

It is clear that the Americans do not want our lumber. They want our resources, our logs and our jobs, and they are getting them. The export of B.C. timber, that is raw logs, has increased from 269,000 cubic metres to 2.9 million cubic metres since 1997 according to the minister of forests. That is a ten-fold increase. This is while the federal government folds its hands and says "wait and see".

It is outrageous that we are allowing American mills to process our logs at bargain rates while the American tariff wall closes our mills. B.C. forest minister De Jong recently said he is considering a tariff on log exports. He certainly has my support. A tariff on log exports would help at least to level the playing field while the dispute continues.

While the anticipated aid package from the federal government will provide extended EI coverage and money for retraining or relocating, British Columbians would like to know why Ottawa has no money for loans or even help with legal fees that are crippling our industry and forcing our mills to close.

In the throne speech we heard that the government would continue to work with its allies to ensure the safety and security of Canadians. Frankly, the government should be embarrassed about its failure to protect our security. In my riding I have many retired military personnel who, along with our active military personnel and our veterans, are likely among the Canadians most disappointed by this throne speech. In the face of greater world conflict, there is no commitment to rebuild our military infrastructure under the government.

We had 90,000 forces when the government took over, now they have been reduced to 53,000. There is no heavy lift capability. There is no capacity to move our troops and equipment without help from the Americans. This was true in Afghanistan but it was also true for domestic crisis like the 1997 flood in Manitoba.

We need an increase of at least \$2 billion in annual funding for the military. We have \$100 million for the Prime Minister's new passenger jets, while the military has aging Sea King helicopters and rejected, used and design-flawed British submarines, but what a bargain.

We need a new Hovercraft for marine search and rescue off Vancouver International Airport. With miles of mud flats not accessible by land or water, only a Hovercraft fills that niche, but there is no budget for infrastructure replacement. The coast guard is told to look for a used one. Where does one find a yard sale for Hovercraft?

Further on security, our marine communication and traffic services is chronically underfunded and understaffed, has no money for routine training and has delayed *ab initio* training. Our fine dedicated officers at MCTS already have been through amalgamation, reorganization, downsizing and cross-training, yet they still experience budget shortfalls. They monitor all our vessel traffic along our coasts. The fisheries committee documented these desperate conditions and wrote the minister. Our coasts are subject to vessels, tankers and terrorist threats, but where is the funding for coast guard monitoring of our high traffic and increasingly vulnerable coastlines?

The government promised in 1994 to end foreign overfishing. Despite a strong recommendation from the Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans about abuses of the NAFO states overfishing groundfish on the Canadian continental shelf, there as been no action and no significant intervention. At the recent NAFO meetings in Spain, member states gave themselves new quotas that ignore the science and continue the abuse of Canadian groundfish stocks.

In 1996 the government promised to revitalize our fisheries, but fisheries failures, mismanagement and conflicts continue on both coasts.

On health care, the throne speech asked Canadians to wait for Mr. Romanow. After pillaging transfer payments to the provinces, the government says to wait, but Canadians are concerned about long waiting lists. Further, evidence that medical interventions cause 100,000 deaths per year has led to calls for a new agency at \$10 million per year to protect Canadians from medical mistakes.

With prescription drug failures being the fourth leading cause of death in the U.S. and 15% of acute care hospital beds occupied by prescription drug failures, maybe drugs and surgery are not the only legitimate interventions. It would have been nice to hear the throne speech commit to providing research dollars to check out promising alternatives that offer better outcomes with lower risks.

*The Address*

If feeding cheap byproducts to cattle in Britain allowed mad cow disease to infect cattle, why does the CFIA allow pig and horse to be fed to Canadian cattle? Every species has its own viruses. Cattle are herbivores. If cost effective measures like chiropractic can save \$2 billion annually, why does Health Canada not research the facts and recommend cost effective measures to the provinces?

• (1150)

Canadians want to know that their government has their interests at heart. Canadians want to know that every effort is being made to ensure their future and security is being addressed. The throne speech whistles that all is well, but Canadians look around and see great cause for concern. There was a sea captain in charge of a state of the art ship who refused to take note of the signs that all was not well. He was so confident that he refused to change course. The disaster of the *Titanic* is not the one that Canadians want for their country.

It is time for the government to demonstrate that it is listening to Canadians from coast to coast and working for the interests of all Canadians.

**Mr. Peter Stoffer (Sackville—Musquodoboit Valley—Eastern Shore, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for bringing up the lack of attention in the throne speech regarding fishery related issues. We are both on the same committee. He correctly brought up the lack of detail or any kind of attention to this serious issue which is affecting the coastlines in this country.

I would like the member to elaborate more. We had a terrible incident on the west coast regarding the coast guard and a family of five that passed away. We had an incident prior to that in British Columbia where a person went over a bridge and was killed because of a lack of a proper diving unit and a lack of resources to our coast guard.

I would ask the member, if the government continues on this path, what does he see for the future of the west coast when it comes to coastal surveillance in our country?

**Mr. James Lunney:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the hon. member for his question.

Indeed, the coast guard and the fisheries department in general are responsible for monitoring both our fish enforcement and certainly the coast guard services have been greatly stressed and under-budgeted for many years.

There was the tragedy with the recent sinking of the *Cap Rouge II* and the loss of five lives. It would be hard to describe what it was like for coast guard divers to be there but not permitted to enter this vessel because of labour code regulations. Why would the letter of the law prevent someone from trying to save a life?

It is apparent that risk is inherent in search and rescue operations. We have officers and trained divers. They trained the military divers that according to regulations they were waiting for.

It is time that our officers be free to use common sense in emergency circumstances to save lives, rather than being bound by the letter of a regulation while lives are endangered.

I wish to mention the coast guard infrastructure. The MCTS centres that we visited with the fisheries committee were under-

staffed, stressed, had stacks of documents of requests for the repair of equipment, with transmitters that were down in Prince Rupert and navigational aids that were not operational. This puts tremendous stress on the officers trying to do their job. There are thousands of miles of coastline that are not even monitored. We depend on voluntary communication for vessels coming into the northern part of our coast. Given the threats of today's world, the government has an obligation to do better to protect our coastline and our navigation.

• (1155)

**Mr. Philip Mayfield (Cariboo—Chilcotin, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, it concerns me when I see in the Speech from the Throne the list of items that we will be spending large amounts of money on when other programs are being sacrificed. For example, the hon. member mentioned fisheries.

It concerns me that at this time the coast guard does not have the resources to respond to environmental spills. Recently it was reported to me that in the Fraser River there were some 2,000 litres of ethylene glycol, antifreeze, dumped or poured into the Fraser River. The coast guard did not have the resources to even respond to investigate. The person who did that should have the book thrown at them because that is destroying not only fish habitat, but killing fish during the spawning season.

Second, I would like the member to comment about the pine beetle. The federal government has money for these programs, but no money to clean up the damage caused by these beetles on federal government lands. I would like the member to comment on that also.

**Mr. James Lunney:** Mr. Speaker, it is frightening that the government has allowed infrastructure to deteriorate to such an extent in the country. The Auditor General identified \$16 billion in frivolous spending. We know of the ad accounts and the sponsorship programs that have caused the government such embarrassment with millions of dollars for reports that are either identical or cannot be found.

Surely it is possible within our budget and within the constraints of our taxpayers to redirect funds to necessary infrastructure to allow our officers to do the job they are trained to do in protecting the environment from spills as our colleague mentioned and allowing for the necessary clean up of emergencies that the pine beetle infestation has caused, and for the proper monitoring of our coasts.

In fact, the fisheries committee wrote to the minister prior to the last budget outlining the deficiencies we found in our communications and in the MCTS program in particular. We were hoping to see those factors addressed in the budget. The reality is that nothing has really changed and our officers are still severely stressed. This needs to change.

**Mr. Roy Cullen (Etobicoke North, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with my colleague, the member for Yukon.

The Speech from the Throne on September 30 and the reply by the Prime Minister in the House of Commons the following day provides the framework for the government's overall policy and program agenda for the months to come. The budget which will probably be delivered in February next year will spell out how this program will be financed.

*The Address*

The government has recommitted itself to sound fiscal management. This means a continuation of the current emphasis on budgetary surpluses, not deficits, the ongoing implementation of a fair and competitive tax regime, strategic investments in the social and economic priorities of Canadians, and more debt reduction.

• (1200)

[*Translation*]

In this context, the government has set itself an ambitious agenda in several key areas for Canadians.

[*English*]

The government has committed itself to a reformed health care system providing greater accountability and further long term federal investments in the health care system.

I would characterize Canada's health care system as the following: one with high per capita spending; one with good health outcomes in terms of items like infant mortality, life expectancy et cetera; but unfortunately, one where we get poor value for our money. In my view we need to focus on ensuring that our health care system is sustainable into the future which is a particular challenge, given demographics and the rapidly increasing number of elderly people in Canada.

Canadians collectively should recommit to the public health system and not to a two or ten tier health care system. Recommitting ourselves however to the public health system brings certain responsibilities.

We should not throw more money at the system. That would be irresponsible and not in the best interest of citizens and Canadian taxpayers. We need to continue to re-engineer the health care system.

[*Translation*]

In the Speech from the Throne, the government promises to help children and families out of poverty. The National Child Benefit for poor families will again be significantly increased.

[*English*]

The government will seek ratification of the Kyoto protocol on climate change. Signing the Kyoto accord will only be meaningful if committed goals can be achieved. While there will be new technologies and businesses created as a result of the implementation of the Kyoto protocol, it is naive to think that these new economy gains will offset the damage to our traditional sectors. The behaviour of Canadian businesses and individuals will have to change.

Canada should focus strategically on areas where the payoffs are largest and, wherever possible, the negative impact is well balanced and moderate. Greenhouse gases emitted by the transportation sector and the treatment of municipal solid waste are two such areas. Economic instruments beyond emissions trading and credits will be needed to aggressively advance the Kyoto agenda. Tax incentives, including shifting tax benefits from non-renewable to renewable sources of energy will be required.

Canada will double our government's development assistance by the year 2010 with half of that increase earmarked for Africa. Given our unique relationship with Somalia, Canada should be playing a stronger leadership role in the search for governance models and

development assistance that will lead to lasting peace, stability and democracy in Somalia and the Horn of Africa. We should also support and assist the Somali-Canadian diaspora in its efforts to bring about peace and security in that area. We need to reward countries like Ghana for its commitment to good governance.

I was pleased to hear in the throne speech the commitment of our government to work with its partners to break down the barriers to the recognition of foreign credentials. This is a significant problem for many of my constituents of Etobicoke North and indeed across Canada. I look forward to cooperation among stakeholder groups not passing the buck and timely improvements in this area.

Canada needs to ensure that our regulatory environment is consistent with our government's innovation agenda. There are areas where this may not be the case. The process for drug approvals is an example where first mover advantage is sometimes lost to Canadian companies. We also need to rethink our approach to cost recovery and user fees to make them more transparent and more linked to performance. It is hoped that the smart regulation initiative outlined in the Speech from the Throne will address issues like these.

The implementation of a national drug strategy is overdue and most important. My riding of Etobicoke North is plagued with problems associated with drug abuse. Organizations such as the Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse can assist the government in the formulation and implementation of an effective drug strategy.

There are a couple of areas which, while not covered in the Speech from the Throne, warrant attention. Although progress on productivity has been encouraging in the last few years, Canada still lags well behind the United States. It is well researched and documented that in companies where employees own shares, productivity gains in excess of 30% are achievable.

Employees share ownership plans, or ESOPs, reach all employees: the receptionist, the factory worker and the manager, not just company executives. Tax policies such as a tax credit similar to that available to investments in labour-sponsored venture capital corporations would encourage the formation of ESOPs and improve our productivity performance in Canada.

The Government of Canada needs a more strategic focus on its important relationship with the United States. This should encompass trade, cross border security, energy, national defence, water resources and a number of other related matters. I look forward to participating in the Prime Minister's task force on Canada-U.S. relations and to the set of recommendations that will be developed to strengthen the ties between legislators, both in Canada and the United States.

*The Address*

Our ability to move goods freely and easily across the border with the U.S.A. is critical, given that 87% of Canada's exports are destined for that market. In addition to policy considerations such as preauthorization, preclearance and border security, bottlenecks in the physical movement of cars and trucks at the border necessitates significant investments in infrastructure.

• (1205)

Dealing with these requirements at border crossings at Windsor, Sarnia and the Peace Portal in Vancouver should take precedence over east-west arteries of the national highway system.

A recent announcement by the federal government in the province of Ontario to make a significant investment in the transportation infrastructure at the Windsor, Ontario border crossing is a very welcome first step.

The government has committed itself to a 10 year program for infrastructure. The program will benefit municipalities such as Toronto but also smaller communities such as Sooke, British Columbia and Colwood, B.C. I recently visited these areas and was told about two very important infrastructure proposals.

[*Translation*]

The Speech from the Throne includes important initiatives for Canada's aboriginals. There are some major challenges to be met in this area. We must work together with our aboriginal brothers and sisters to improve their quality of life and build their capacity for economic and social development.

The disabled also deserve special attention. We must see that they have genuine opportunities to achieve their full potential.

[*English*]

The government has also indicated its intention to extend its investments in affordable housing for those whose needs are greatest. In my riding of Etobicoke North, with its extensive array of high-rise apartments, this will be very welcomed.

Many of my constituents on fixed and modest incomes are increasingly spending a disproportionate amount of their limited income on accommodation and something needs to be done. I have already begun a dialogue in my riding with agencies interested in building this new affordable housing capacity in Etobicoke North.

What I have outlined is an ambitious agenda, one that does have a price tag. The government will have to carefully examine current spending and cut programs that are of a lesser priority.

Departmental and agency budgets will also face reallocation. Whatever it takes, we must maintain a balanced budget and not return to deficit. Canadians have made the sacrifices necessary to get us to this point and are not prepared to move backwards.

As the Prime Minister mentioned in his speech, the government will establish budget projections over a two or three year time horizon. This is important because beyond two or three years economic predictability becomes more difficult. We should not encumber future administrations with an unrealistic budget burden.

Our nation's finances have been turned around and this has created the possibility for a more activist agenda. We should remember,

however, that our federal debt still sits at some \$450 billion. We need to continue to reduce our debt to GDP ratio as well as the absolute amount of our debt.

The actions of our government to date, by paying down over \$40 billion in debt, have resulted in annual savings in interest charges of some \$3 billion. These savings are being redeployed to priorities such as health care and tax cuts. This action needs to be continued.

The government has laid out an ambitious and important agenda. We now need to develop a responsible implementation plan, and I commit myself to this task.

**Mr. Roy Bailey (Souris—Moose Mountain, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I want to pose a question to my colleague opposite, one that was not really dealt with in the throne speech itself but one that is on the minds of thousands of Canadians coast to coast. The question, which obviously the result will come from the Supreme Court, concerns the terminology of marriage.

We have one premier who has already stated that if the government sits by and allows a judgment to come down that would change the meaning of the act completely, that particular provincial premier would use the notwithstanding clause.

Would the hon. member, thinking about this as an individual, see that this would be a terrible injustice to have the Supreme Court change that which we inherited from generations?

• (1210)

**Mr. Roy Cullen:** Mr. Speaker, this is a very difficult area but one in which I have been very clear to my constituents in Etobicoke North.

When we had the legislation dealing with same sex benefits, I and a number of other members who sit in the House fought for the preamble which stated that this should not change the definition of marriage which is between a man and a woman.

We need to allow for the appeal to take place. I gather from the Minister of Justice or the committee that there might be a review of this issue but I for one am not very anxious to change the definition of marriage. In my view, if people are of such an inclination that they need to have a relationship and the only way to have a meaningful relationship is with someone of the same sex, then I say that the most important thing in life is to have a meaningful relationship. However, I do not believe that this relationship needs to be recognized by the state as a marriage. I think marriage was designed for a purpose, which is the procreation of children.

While my views may not be popular with everyone, I have been fairly consistent in what I have said to constituents who have a concern about this.

We need to let that play out through the court system. Whether the province uses a notwithstanding clause, I hope it will not need to do that. As legislators we will deal with this in the way that Canadians intend us to do.

*The Address*

**Mr. Svend Robinson (Burnaby—Douglas, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I want to follow up on the last exchange and ask the hon. member perhaps to clarify why gay and lesbian people, who are involved in committed, loving relationships and who want the choice of celebrating those relationships through marriage, should be denied that choice in a society that reflects and celebrates diversity. The Ontario and Quebec courts have ruled that way.

When the hon. member suggests, and I think he said that the purpose of marriage was procreation, frankly, that is an insult to the many couples who are not able to have children, elderly couples who marry and many gay and lesbian partners who raise children.

Would the member clarify why it is that in any way we would be weakening the institution of marriage by allowing gay and lesbian people to have that choice? Surely that is the essence of equality in a democratic society.

**Mr. Roy Cullen:** Mr. Speaker, I guess it comes down to some fundamental differences in terms of beliefs. My own view is that gay and lesbian couples should be able to operate very freely, and in fact they do. Some fairly high profile marriages have taken place in a church in Ontario.

However I am strongly of the view that while we should not create impediments for people who are gay or lesbian to form very meaningful relationships, I do not believe that it is incumbent upon the state to recognize those relationships as marriages. It goes back to, I suppose, a very fundamental view of what marriage is meant to be. While I respect the rights of people to form the—

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order, please. I only have so much generosity given the large number of people who want to speak on the debate of the day.

• (1215)

**Mr. Larry Bagnell (Yukon, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my speech is longer than the time allotted so I will try to get as far as I can on the various topics I would like to address.

As chair of our foreign affairs defence and international aid caucus, I think it is incumbent upon me to make some comments on parts of the throne speech that refer to some of those areas, especially because of the crisis the world is now facing with Iraq and the debates that are going on in the evenings.

I must say that the debates of last night and the night before were tremendous, as I am sure the debate tonight will be. They were a good example of how Parliament should work, with people from all parties putting in constructive positions for the government to take note of as it makes its decisions. In this respect I think it has been exemplary to other parliamentarians that the ministers and the parliamentary secretaries have been staying until midnight to listen to what has to be said.

One comment in the throne speech states:

—the government will remain vigilant and ready to ensure the protection of Canadians from emerging threats, and will work with the United States to address our shared security needs.

I want to continue on with Iraq a bit. I was in the House the last two nights until midnight but I cannot be here tonight so I just want to add some further reflections.

One of the statements in the throne speech makes it quite clear to the people who are questioning our commitment to our allies and to the United States that we have always worked closely with them and will continue to work with them. We have many shared goals and aspirations and of course we will continue to work with them.

Another point in the throne speech states:

The government will continue to work with its allies to ensure the safety and security of Canadians.

If that were ever a question, we are steadfastly working with our allies and we will continue to work with our allies. There is absolutely no question about that. That is in the throne speech.

It also is absolutely certain that Canada will continue to maintain its sovereignty. We will continue to make our own decisions. The Prime Minister has made those things quite clear. Certainly members on this side, and I am sure all members of the House, want Canada to remain a sovereign nation and continue, as it always has, to make its own decisions on these things. When we have a very close friends, we do lots of things with them but we do not necessarily do everything with them. We will continue to make our own decisions as to when and how to act on these situations.

A further point in the throne speech states:

Canada will continue to work through organizations such as the United Nations to ensure that the rule of international law is respected and enforced.

I think we have made that point loud and clear during the debate.

On the legal aspects, I recommend that those people who did not have a chance to listen to the tremendous speech by the member for Mount Royal last night at midnight, which was a detailed analysis of international law, take that into their thinking.

I would like to touch on a few other aspects and things to think about.

In my input into the debate I did not say that I had any answers. I did not provide any answers in either direction as to whether to engage the military or not. What I am trying to add to the debate are things that we should carefully think about.

The first thing we should think about concerns the United Nations. When the United Nations designs a prescription or a motion as to how the world community should act, I hope it keeps in mind that military consequences are not the only type of consequences. If there are certain problems with the inspection process, which of course we all hope goes well and that there will be access to everything, but depending on the size of the hiccups and the size of the remedies, I hope people keep in mind that there are other actions other than military and that we should bring all of these into force and consider them in designing the consequences.

The United Nations resolutions have to be very careful in their design. If they are not designed correctly, as with any resolution, they could be used improperly.

*The Address*

•(1220)

We would not want any particular country using a resolution inappropriately if it is too broad or does not define what it allows. We have seen in the past that people can say it gives them direction when it is not clear, when it is too open or too ambiguous. Hopefully the Security Council will keep its hands on the levers of force so that what it intends actually occurs.

We must also think about the interconnection. This is a very complex situation, as the Middle East always is, as war always is and as terrorism always is. Think of the complex interaction between the fight on terrorism we are engaged in and this particular conflict with Iraq. We have to think about whether the conflict with Iraq and the way we engage in it will be a distraction to the effectiveness of our war on terrorism, which has a long way to go. We are nowhere near the goals we want to accomplish relating to that. How much will this distract attention from that? Will it distract attention negatively?

We have a number of Muslim allies in Arab countries in the world related to the war on terrorism right now. If we do not act appropriately with regard to Iraq as far as perception or reality goes, what kind of effect will it have on this very delicate balance we have with the allies on our war against terrorism?

Once again if our action in Iraq is not very careful or is without the proper perceptions, what will be the effect of destabilizing other countries in that region and other parts of the world? There are countries that are very close to getting into regimes like Saddam Hussein's which we obviously do not want. There are countries that now are allies but have very strong fundamental groups and movements that could easily take over if the country was destabilized with the motivation that we had inflamed them for acting inappropriately and not carefully in our action on Iraq. We have to take this in the context of the various elections and governments in the world and what their status is related to their levers on the power in the various countries involved. It all has an effect.

As I said earlier, perception is reality in politics. We have to be careful that whatever we do, no matter how right it is, does not appear to be a western world overpowering a religion, a smaller nation and causing resentment in the masses of millions in the world that Canada has to have a good relationship with. We are a great multicultural country and a great leader in the world in that respect. Our pluralism brings us strength at home. It brings us those groups in Canada that we can now rely on to provide us with advice and input into the situation. I hope they do that so that we can make an even stronger intellectual decision after the great ideas that have come from this debate.

Another item I want to raise relates to the large amount of people who support Islam throughout the Middle East and the Far East which this is going to have an effect on if we are not careful in how we do it. They do not have access to all the information we have. In a situation like this one, what perception gets down to the people living in the streets? Think about the millions of people in India. Think about the millions of people from India who actually live in the Middle East and the area we are talking about. Think about the effect it will have on them, on the many people who are friendly with

us at this time, on our important allies in the area and on our relationships in the world.

•(1225)

We have to think about the countries adjacent to Iraq, the countries most under threat within range of the missiles that have been developed and they are developing even longer range missiles. Obviously people in those countries would be the most upset. They should be involved in a coalition. They are not all involved yet. We must get them onside. If they are the most threatened we want them to be part of any coalition or any understanding. We do not want to hurt our relationships with those countries and cause their citizens to do things that would not benefit Canada in the long run.

**Mr. Rahim Jaffer (Edmonton—Strathcona, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I listened attentively to our hon. colleague from the opposite side. It dawned on me that even though he was sharing his thoughts on the Middle East, we are here trying to debate the throne speech this morning. He is a little ahead of himself, seeing that the Middle East debate is later on this evening.

However I would like to ask him a question specifically on the throne speech, since he is so concerned about some of the Middle East countries and some of the areas of the regions he spoke about. I believe he referred to India and Pakistan.

Clearly in the throne speech one of the major priorities for the government is Kyoto and the environmental accord it is pushing forward on, regardless of the effects on the economy, regardless of the human impact in Canada, which we still do not know because no impact studies have been provided by the government. I would like to ask the member specifically, since he is obviously concerned about some of the regions of the world that he spoke about in his speech, what sort of message are we sending out to many of these countries, especially on Kyoto, when we are forcing industrialized countries to sign on to an agreement that is not even engaging some of the worst polluters in the world, India, Pakistan and China to name a few?

Would he not agree that the best way to solve some of the environmental problems is to actually put some regulations in place that would force industrialized countries to work with those countries instead of signing some grandiose agreement? Should we not put something in place so that we could share technologies with those countries and force them to change their environmental practices in a proactive way, rather than forcing something that could cause huge negative impacts for our economy?

**Mr. Larry Bagnell:** Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for his excellent question. He will be surprised at how much I agree with him on a number of points. I am not totally sure I understood the part about the other countries. However it is great that he asked the question because there are a number of things I would like to say.

It is great to have these other countries, especially the polluting countries, work through the United Nations, and to try to sell them technologies. As I said, we are big supporters of that. There are great economic benefits to working on the solutions to Kyoto. Parliamentarians heard some great speeches yesterday afternoon about the success of that. If I understood the member's direction in that area, I am supportive of it.

*The Address*

I am also agree with him that we need to know the effects. My personal opinion is we need to know the costs. I have talked to the minister about this. I too am anxious to know what are the costs of implementing this to the various sectors of the economy, to various people. They should have the right to know if they will still be as positive as they are. Canadians are 80% onside and my riding is tremendously onside.

I was delighted the throne speech explained that climate change has far more dramatic effects in the north. Although I do not have time to explain them now, I would be happy to explain to people some of the examples. I have had a lot of input from my riding, including from the Council of Yukon First Nations, the medical association and a number of others, about how important support is for that because it has such a critical effect on the Yukon.

**Mr. Peter Adams (Peterborough, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I disagree completely with the member opposite. We do not force poorer nations to do anything. We lead by example. Kyoto is a good example of that. If we are not willing to lead ourselves, how can we persuade other poorer nations to follow our example?

I would like to ask my colleague, who is interested in foreign affairs, about a very cryptic part of the Speech from the Throne. I am very interested in young people and their future. There is one sentence which says:

[The government] will create more opportunities for young Canadians to help clean up our environment and assist in achieving Canada's global priorities, particularly in Africa.

Has my colleague given any thought to this, through his caucus on foreign affairs? Does this mean we will revive and strengthen Katimavik, or develop something similar, so that young people in Canada can clean up the environment and go overseas and do good work?

● (1230)

**The Deputy Speaker:** Not to take anything away from the merits of the question, but I am afraid the reply is going to come at another place at another time because the time has elapsed.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Francine Lalonde (Mercier, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to indicate that I will be sharing my time with the member for Charlesbourg—Jacques-Cartier.

The Prime Minister recently let it be known that he would be staying on until February 2004, and no later, and then announced that he would bring back Parliament two weeks later so as to be able to present Canadians and Quebecers with a throne speech. The least one can say is that the people in my riding who listened to this throne speech did not get their money's worth.

I would like to start off with a quote the leader of the Bloc Québécois used at the very beginning of his speech in reply to the Speech from the Throne. This quote is a statement the Prime Minister made when he first ran as the member for Shawinigan in 1963. It goes as follows:

I entered this election campaign driven by duty, because it is the duty of a serious man to analyze the situation and examine the points of a political program to remedy what is not working right in Canada. . . . It is a matter of drawing up the constitution anew, not among ten provinces, but between two nations—

The young MP from Shawinigan, he of the long political career he likes to keep reminding us of, had an opportunity in this last throne speech to talk about what he felt were his successes and what was left to be done on this so important matter. But what were we treated to instead?

We were treated to a catalogue—the term used by a number of commentators—of measures which are, in large part, nothing new. As far as the Quebec people and nation are concerned, they do what the Prime Minister said in 1963 when speaking of two nations:

—that there is this in particular for our people and our nation, that it continues its encroachment on the specific areas of jurisdiction of Quebec and thumps its nose at the consensus in Quebec.

This is quite an accomplishment for someone who claimed to have entered politics in order to reshape the constitution, not among ten provinces, but between two nations.

There is no recognition whatsoever in the throne speech of fiscal imbalance. As one of the ten provinces, Quebec has needs that must be met. This is enough to alarm anyone, as Yves Séguin was alarmed. This is the man the Premier of Quebec appointed to chair a committee on fiscal imbalance. Without a shadow of a doubt, he established the existence of a fiscal imbalance that is dangerous for the level of services to which Quebecers are entitled.

● (1235)

As a result of that imbalance, the structural surpluses are in Ottawa and the growing needs in Quebec.

As far as health is concerned, we are waiting on the outcome of the Romanow commission, but it has referred right from the start to standardization. As we know, Quebec has its own culture, not in language and fine arts, but in a different method of organization. There is no mention of one vital issue for Quebec, parental leave. I say for Quebec but I should say for the families of Quebec, the young families, for those who would like to start families, but are going through hard times. I am referring to parental leave for those women and men—since the leave is also available to fathers—who are not covered by the present Employment Insurance Act and all those who do not have a decent income under the present legislation.

Quebec plans to have a parental leave program that should be put in place because of its specific demographic situation.

It is critical for Quebec to be able to provide young couples and all those who want children with the means to do so, and this includes real parental leave. It also includes assistance, and not just to poor families. Sure, we must fight poverty. However, the decision to have children is something that must be recognized by society.

Again, because of the fiscal imbalance, Quebec is not able to fully recognize this most fundamental contribution to society.

The Speech from the Throne is also silent on employment insurance, which explains why large segments of the population are living in poverty. It is also silent on softwood lumber, but it does include many intrusions by the federal government.

*The Address*

I will conclude by discussing foreign affairs, which what I am responsible for. This of course includes Canada's relations with other countries. The Prime Minister, who had a golden opportunity to present his vision of Canada's role in the world, announced that the government will establish long term guidelines before the end of its mandate.

However, he did not mention one of the key issues for this country, namely the changing role of the United States in the world, following the collapse of the Soviet empire and the affirmation of the United States' superpower status, which raises questions for Canada. Our country, which has built an international reputation in the areas of peacekeeping and human rights promotion, must define, after consulting Quebecers and Canadians, a clear position in its relations with its powerful neighbour and friend, which has to realize that we are a separate country.

Does it take a sovereignist to remind the Prime Minister that he had an opportunity to propose a plan, a vision, but did not do so?

The Prime Minister who, when he entered politics, wanted to redraft the Constitution not between 10 provinces, but between two nations, should have presented his vision, at least for the nation that he decided to serve, namely the Canadian nation.

• (1240)

**Mr. Richard Marceau (Charlesbourg—Jacques-Cartier, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, before I get to the main issue, I would like to take a few moments to speak about the form of the political exercise in which we are engaged today.

As recently as last weekend, in my riding of Charlesbourg—Jacques-Cartier, people were asking me to explain what a throne speech was. I said that someone who had not been elected to office, someone who had been chosen and appointed by the Prime Minister, would be reading the government's policies out to a chamber full of other unelected and unrepresentative people. When I mentioned that MPs, the people's representatives, those who had been elected, did not have access to this chamber, people were surprised, to say the least.

They had some idea of what it meant. However, when one stops to think about it for a few minutes—and that is all the time I would spend—the absurdity of these colonial trappings hits home, and one might wonder how this exercise is representative of societies, such as those of Canada and of Quebec, which are themselves hardly monarchist and very egalitarian. All in all, one might have some questions about the form itself of the exercise, which, of course, is not as important as its substance.

What we saw in the Speech from the Throne is a reflection of Canadian dynamics. We have a country that has been built at quite a pace since 1995. This pace gathered steam in 1995, following the defeat of the yes side in the referendum, but it began back in 1982. I am referring to the building of a strong central Canada with equal provinces, a nation from coast to coast. When conflict arises between the Canadian way and the Quebec way of doing things, it will always be the Canadian way that will come out on top.

About this nation building, the Speech from the Throne is a good illustration of the fact that there is no status quo. Those who believe that some constitutional, administrative, or even political status quo

exists are totally wrong. There is no status quo. Since 1982, Canada has rebuilt itself, and the process has gathered speed since 1995. This process is clearly illustrated by three specific examples.

The first example is that of centralization, a power grab by the central government in areas of responsibility that do not come under its jurisdiction. This is not simply about labelling powers. In very specific areas, this centralization has meant that Quebec cannot implement programs that it wants.

Just this week, the Speech from the Throne mentioned that the federal government would provide access to quality day care. Yet everyone knows that Quebec already has a \$5 a day day care program that is very popular, in fact the only problem with it is that it is too popular. The federal government has once again announced its intention to interfere in research, in literacy and education, when we know very well that this is a provincial jurisdiction. The same can be said for health, education, university research, public transit. There are numerous examples.

So, the first example of this nation building is a complete disregard for jurisdiction by Ottawa, as it decides to act in areas where it does not belong.

• (1245)

The second example, which follows on the first one, shows that fiscal imbalance allows Ottawa to impinge upon areas which do not come under federal jurisdiction. I would remind the House that because of this fiscal imbalance, which is recognized by everyone in Canada—except the government—by the three political parties in the National Assembly and by all of the provinces, Ottawa can now afford, through its spending power, to get interfere in provincial areas of jurisdiction.

Ottawa can tell the provinces “You are hungry, you are thirsty, you cannot afford to carry out your responsibilities in your own jurisdictions, but it does not matter. We, in Ottawa, can give you the money you need; you will be able to do your work, but under our conditions and according to our standards”.

On one hand, we have Ottawa's stated intention to centralize, illustrated by the three examples from the throne speech that I have given. Also linked to that is the issue of fiscal imbalance, where Quebec loses \$50 million, that is \$2 billion a year. Ottawa has the means and the desire to impose its standardizing and centralizing vision for Canada.

The third example of this centralizing web is the fact that the federal government does not care about consensus in Quebec in the least. For example, I was very disappointed not to see anything about young offenders in the Speech from the Throne.

Judges, defence counsel, crown attorneys, social workers, police officers and the three political parties represented in the National Assembly all say that Quebec's approach to young offenders had produced the best results in terms of youth crime in North America.



*The Address*

With its bill, which has now been passed and which, by the way, that will be challenged before the appeal court at the end of November, the federal government has axed that approach. While it would have been so easy to allow Quebec to continue with its approach, since it was producing good results, the government said that, no matter, it would ignore the Quebec consensus, because it had a Canadian vision and, when there is a conflict between the Canadian vision and the Quebec vision, the former must prevail.

Here is another example: parental leave. Quebec is willing to give its young families the most generous parental leave program in Canada. What has Ottawa done? It refuses to transfer the money to Quebec so that it can impose its own parental leave program, which is not as good nor as generous as Quebec's program and to which six out of ten people would not have access.

I have used various elements of the Speech from the Throne to show how Ottawa is building a Canada where it wants to interfere in areas that are not under its jurisdiction, which it has the means to do because of the fiscal imbalance, where it can impose its Canadian vision, where it shows nothing but contempt for any consensus that may exist in Quebec and for Quebec's way of doing things. I think that all that is leading Quebecers to realize more and more that there is no status quo, which brings us back to my introduction.

There is no status quo, and the choice that Quebecers are facing is this: they can either build their own country or accept to be a province like the others, accept to live in a system that is increasingly centralized and standardized.

When the alternatives are clear, I am sure that the latter option, this centralized Canada, will be rejected by the vast majority of Quebecers.

[*English*]

**Mr. Reg Alcock (Winnipeg South, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin my remarks today by congratulating the Prime Minister, the cabinet, all of the MPs who have worked so hard over these last few years and contributed to the development of this speech, the staff who have worked diligently over the summer, the public servants, and Canadians, whom we see reflected over and over again in this speech.

In many ways this is the starting point that gets us back on track, back where we wanted to be after the 2000 election, a course we were diverted from by the terrible events of September 11. All members will know just how the House was seized with the work on security to try to ensure that we had the capacity to respond to and to prevent a repetition of such tragedies. Now we are back to the agenda that the government laid out in the election campaign of 2000, with which so many members here have been struggling and on which they have been working over the time since the last election.

I would make the comment right off the top that this is an enormously ambitious agenda. It is an enormous number of initiatives that we have to fit into a relatively short period of time and the House will have to work extremely hard to see quality legislation produced that reflects the wishes of Canadians.

Within the speech, we see how a process within the House, within the work done by members here on the Hill, now comes together in a

series of commitments that soon, with the passage of legislation, will become programs that will go on to benefit Canadians for a very long time. I want to focus on a few of them.

I was privileged to be a member of the urban task force. We spent a great deal of time travelling across the country speaking to mayors and citizens in cities all across the country, trying to sort out how we could assist them in grappling with some of the terrible problems with which cities are confronted. Our large urban centres are having difficulty, in part because of a restricted tax base, in responding to the demands for new infrastructure that will allow them to build the kind of modern infrastructure that will make it possible for them to remain competitive into the future. We heard over and over again about the need for the country to come to terms with how we treat and support our cities.

In doing this, I wish to congratulate the mayor of Winnipeg, Mayor Murray, who has been a very effective leader in this debate over the last few years. The mayors of the five big cities have contributed strongly, as has the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, to the work that the task force did. We see that reflected in the Speech from the Throne.

If there was one thing the mayors asked us for it was to please extend the timeframe for infrastructure so that they could plan, so that infrastructure would not come as a surprise that is announced every now and again. Then they have to adjust all of their planning in order to fit the funds that are available. They asked us over and over again to put in place a plan that would give them some predictability and, frankly, the opportunity to move in a more coordinated fashion toward the development of the infrastructure that they feel they need in their regions. The government has responded to that.

The House will be challenged to go through the details of this to see whether it meets some of the tests that the mayors put on us. One of the things I will be interested in looking at is whether we will be tied to the old trilateral structure for these agreements or whether the federal government will free itself and allow itself to work bilaterally with cities. That was an issue that came up over and over again in those debates. I am hoping and will be arguing that it should be included in this legislative agenda.

Above all, I want to thank the member for York West, who chaired that process and who worked countless hours. In fact none of us are sure how she managed to keep up with the demands. She produced a very competent report that we now see reflected in a series of commitments in the Speech from the Throne.

I want to stop a minute to talk about a program that was actually introduced some time ago by the government. In the Speech from the Throne there is a commitment to substantially increasing it. That is the child tax benefit. I think that some years from now when people start reflecting on this, they will recognize that the child tax benefit is as significant a social program as some of the other main programs we have put in place, such as health care and pensions, those big pillars of our social safety net.

*The Address*

• (1250)

This is a program that for the first time steps back from some of the paternalistic attitudes that we have had toward very poor people, a step back from surrounding them in a network of services that are available only if they are good, a step back from people who are caught in the welfare trap. It says that people are competent to make their own decisions, that some people simply do not have access for a variety of reasons, such as low wage rates, lack of education and other things, to the kind of financial support that allows them to live healthy lives and raise healthy children. It puts money directly into their hands and trusts them to be able to make competent decisions on behalf of their families. I think it is a radical change from the history of social welfare in this country. I think the government should be congratulated for bringing it in. I think the Prime Minister is to be congratulated for committing to substantially increase that credit.

I want to congratulate people like Wayne Helgason from the Social Planning Council of Winnipeg and Mike Owen from the Winnipeg Boys and Girls Clubs, who have worked hard to help the government to understand the value of stepping back from those more paternalistic services and delivering services directly.

I also want to spend a bit of time on first nations. In Manitoba we have a very large first nations population. In the city of Winnipeg we have a large, growing younger generation. An ever-increasing portion of the workforce is made up of young first nations people. There has been a dramatic change in the leadership within first nations communities over the three decades that I have been working with them. I worked very closely with them in the early eighties. I am absolutely and deeply impressed with the quality of the leadership, the quality of the governance that is being built in those communities.

We have several pieces of legislation coming forward. There is the governance act, which we will have to look at very carefully and work on with leaders. I want to thank leaders like Grand Chief Margaret Swan and Chief Jerry Fontaine, who have worked closely with me and with others to help us understand how that legislation can be improved.

I want to congratulate the government for the commitments around economic development. If there is anything that is going to help us get out of some of the traps that have been created historically, it will be to give people the tools through education, early childhood development and support in starting to take control of their own lives economically. I think it is an incredibly important initiative. It is important for my province. I think the government should be congratulated for doing it.

On immigration, if we were to prioritize the two or three big initiatives for my province and my city, certainly assisting aboriginals would be one and immigration would be another. We live in a very large area with a relatively small population. Here again I wish to congratulate a lot of people who have worked very hard: the minister responsible for the provincial nominee program, Becky Barrett; the business council with Art DeFehr and Bob Silver; the people on our immigration advisory committee, Sharad Chandra and Ken Zaifman and the 70 or 80 people who work month after month trying to sort out ways to solve these problems. In Manitoba

the provincial nominee program has a 91% success rate at bringing people in and settling them in the community with jobs and helping them become very successful. That is because of the work of the people in Manitoba who are so committed to seeing immigration grow.

I also want to thank our Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, who has taken the time to meet with these people and work with them, not once but several times, and continues to do that and to pick up their challenges. One of the very first things that the group raised with the new minister of immigration was the problem with credentials and how we can bring in people who have professional credentials but cannot work in their field because they cannot get access to local licensing. That is because of the multiplicity of laws across the country and how the laws are fixed, in either arm's-length organizations or provincial jurisdictions. We have to sort that out if we are going to be effective at recruiting the best from around the world to live in our country. I think the minister has done an absolutely superb job. In the Thanksgiving break week there will be a two-day federal-provincial conference on this issue. The minister will bring together the ministers of all the provinces so that they can finally sit down at the table to try to sort out this important area.

• (1255)

I want to move on to research and development because there is a series of initiatives here that I think are timely and important. They are going to be difficult for the House and we are going to have to work hard to sort them out, but I also want to talk about some of the things we have done that I think need improving and which we now have an opportunity to fix.

It has been said by some that dealing in the area of public policy is a little like trying to change a tire on a moving car. The thing is in progress and has a certain infrastructure and momentum and we are trying to fix it as it goes along. That is particularly true when the government gets involved, creates a number of initiatives that get into play and then discovers that maybe some aspects have worked well but others have not. I think that is the case in our support for research and development.

I am, and I declare it every time I stand in the House, a huge proponent of increasing the support for research and development, for the development and acquisition of knowledge, as a way of maintaining our competitive edge in the world. I am also a huge proponent of beginning to incorporating new technologies in the management of public space. That will allow us to meet a whole bunch of goals that I hear members of the House talking about, such as increased transparency and accountability. They are part of the paradigm of becoming smarter as a country.

At the same time I think there are some real problems in our research infrastructure. Some of them existed before the coming of this government, but some of them have been created, fostered and enhanced by this government. Let me reference two of them.

First, we have put a lot of new money into initiatives and granting councils such as the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council. We did a big reform of the Institutes of Health Research and again added additional funding. These are important initiatives.

*The Address*

The Institutes of Health Research is a model of how a network research institution can be built. It incorporates the best in every province and builds upon their existing strengths. Alan Bernstein and others in that organization should be congratulated for their leadership and the very important work they do. I hope we will find a way to steadily increase the funding that is available to them. Similarly, the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council is well networked and provides important support to researchers all across this country in understanding how we live.

But there are some problems. I would say that NSERC, the sciences research council, and the Canada Foundation for Innovation are stuck in an older model. Frankly, I do not think they have caught on to what needs to happen in a modern economy. I think that they basically have dismissed most of the country and have decided that there are only five universities in Canada worth supporting and have biased the majority of their funding toward those five. I think that is wrong.

There is another thing we have done. We have announced a multiplicity of programs. We now have health research, social sciences, NSERC, the Canada Foundation for Innovation and the chairs program, as well as another foundation for the environment, with a number of pockets of research money scattered throughout various departments. So universities have to bring on staff and divert professorial time away from actually doing research or teaching to “grantsmanship”. They run around trying to negotiate the multiplicity of doors they have to get through in order to assemble the financial support needed to do the work that they do.

In this throne speech, we see a series of commitments about continuing to increase financial support. I would hope and I will be arguing that we need to shape this support so that we correct the imbalance created by the Canada Foundation for Innovation and NSERC, so that we begin to recognize, as the Institutes of Health Research and SSHRC have done, that there is capacity in every single university in every single part of the country. I hope we will use the tools the government has to perhaps move those two organizations into a more modern view of management, one that is more responsive to the kind of Canada that I believe most Canadians would like to see built. There are other elements within that package. If we look at how the speech is written, we will note that there are a number of sections. This one is in learning and innovation. There is another section about smart regulation.

• (1300)

There are going to be some debates here: changes in copyright protection, changes and finalization of a very important piece of work that was done by the health committee on new reproductive technologies, and pesticide use. These issues have been debated well by the House. The piece of work that was done by the health committee which I had the privilege to be a part of, the former leader of the Alliance, Mr. Manning, and others, was to me a model of how good work can be done on difficult, contentious issues.

Debates around here have a range from the pretty mundane, ordinary kind of boring debates right up to the hottest of emotional and personal issues. That topic took us right into all of the areas we are so fearful around, such as abortion and the rights of the unborn, and all of those kinds of things. Yet, that committee was able to

grapple with those and come through that experience to produce a report that every member of the committee felt good about.

I once wrote a piece on how it is not possible for the House of Commons to make an optimal decision. What is optimal depends on the point of view of the individual putting it forward. No matter what people put forward they will not be thoroughly pleased or get 100% because the nature of this place is ultimately to compromise. It is ultimately to find the most optimal route from a complex set of opinions, a complex set of beliefs, and a complex set of needs. That was something we achieved in that committee on an exceptionally difficult topic. I was proud to be a part of it.

Now we are down to the work in the House. All the committees would like to work on their pieces of legislation. I had the privilege of being part of the work to create a new committee in the House. It was created before the summer recess. It is the new Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates. Because it is a new committee there are all sorts of expectations and all sorts of things being brought to the committee for us to work on but I want to—

**Mr. Darrel Stinson:** We have no expectations from this side. We know exactly what it will do.

**Mr. Reg Alcock:** Well, I suspect members will get out of the committee what they choose to put into the committee, frankly.

The genesis of the committee comes out of a couple of things. It comes out of an interest of many members of the House to start to get better informed about how the new information and communication technologies can be a lever for change, substantial change in the nature of public spacing, public management, in citizen involvement and a whole host of things.

One of the things that has to happen is that people need to get up to speed on that. They need to understand that. They need to develop an understanding of what the capabilities are before they begin to apply it to something as complex as government. This committee has a mandate to do that. It has a unique mandate in that it has a mandate to look at things across government, not just down one department, but across every single government department.

It also has a mandate which arose from work that was done by a member of the Alliance and a member of our party who produced a report that talked about the need for reforming and improving the estimates process. We have a tool for significant organizational change. We have a lot of background understanding about how accountability structures work in the House and we have put them together.

We are going to try to build a committee process that allows all members from all sides to lead on these topics. I invite all members to be involved. The test will be whether or not we as members can come together and work collaboratively to produce substantive change. I invite other members to join in this and we will see what happens.

*The Address*

•(1305)

**Mr. Svend Robinson (Burnaby—Douglas, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member spoke of the importance of increasing the child tax benefit. My colleagues and I hope that the government will see fit to double the child tax benefit as Campaign 2000 recommended, the group of Canadians who have been working with dedication for many years in the fight against child poverty.

I want to ask the hon. member about a contradiction in the government's approach to people who are living in poverty. People with disabilities in many cases are some of the poorest of Canadian citizens.

At the end of August the government's Minister of Finance tabled a proposed regulation that is a shameful attack on people with disabilities. That regulation would cut people off from the disability tax credit in circumstances in which they need help to feed themselves. In this heartless and cruel proposal by the Minister of Finance, decisions of the Federal Court of Appeal and other courts are being overturned by bureaucrats and by the finance ministry. It is now telling people with disabilities, who are already struggling, that if they are able to get a meal from their plate to their mouth that is the end of the test. If they are struggling to get their food to the table, if they need assistance in getting the food, or assistance in feeding, tough luck. It is one of the most disgraceful and shameful attacks on people with disabilities.

I ask the member who spoke of the new generosity of the government, will he stand in his place and condemn that proposed regulation brought forward by his own government? Will he assure the House and the people of Canada that he and his colleagues will do everything in their power to join with the subcommittee on the status of persons with disabilities, my colleague from Dartmouth, who was our spokesperson on that committee, his own colleague, the former chair of the subcommittee, the member for St. Paul's, and say to the Minister of Finance to stop this appalling attack on people with disabilities?

•(1310)

**Mr. Reg Alcock:** Mr. Speaker, if I were to stand and do that, I would have to stand behind the lineup of Liberal members already doing that.

The member for St. Paul's, as the member rightly mentioned, is the former chair of the subcommittee on the status of persons with disabilities. The member for Fredericton spent a good portion of his time a few years ago helping to develop increased programs and support for disabled people.

I can tell the member from my own experience about a friend of mine who called me a little while ago. He has a daughter who was born without her left arm. When she was a baby the cost was not a big deal. It was not much different raising her. But as she got older and ready for school, where she had to have special prostheses and other things to help her fit in, he finally applied for the credit. He was refused. He phoned me and asked how she could not be disabled? We phoned the department. We were told she never had the arm and therefore how could she be disabled by the loss of it?

I want to be really clear about this. I am quite proud to stand here and condemn that decision, as most members on this side are. I do

not know what has gone wrong. I do not know the rationale. We have tried to sort it out. All of us will be looking to see what the minister says because it is absolutely wrong. I had my staff go back and pull the speeches of finance ministers when they talked about, first, the introduction of the tax credit and then the changes.

I asked for the purpose of it. Over and over again we saw ministers saying it was to help people deal with extraordinary costs created by their disabilities. It is not like we are giving people a gold plated road to retirement. This is not a big credit. It is a small amount of money that helps people deal with the extraordinary cost created by not being able to function like the rest of us. The actions of the department are shameful.

**Mr. Monte Solberg (Medicine Hat, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for Red Deer.

It is a pleasure to rise and address the Speech from the Throne today. I want to address it first of all from the perspective of being a member from the riding of Medicine Hat in Alberta. In a moment I will talk about how it affects the portfolio which I critique, namely human resources development.

The first thing I would say in reflecting on the throne speech is that it seemed to put forward a number of ideas that we already have heard about many times in the past. We have heard the government talk endlessly in past throne speeches about the need to deal with child poverty. That is fine. We agree with that, but it seems like every time there is a throne speech the government comes up with some new proposal to address the problem but it never gets fixed.

The same is true of issues affecting aboriginals. We see new program after new program. Again there are new programs here but the problem never seems to get better. Oftentimes it seems to get worse. That should cause us to reflect a little about whether or not these programs are a good idea or maybe we need to come up with some completely new approaches.

We see the government addressing the issue of Kyoto in the throne speech. In my judgment that is completely out of step with where Canadians are at. Canadians want clean air and they want to deal with pollutants in the air. They want to get rid of smog. If the public understood all the implications of Kyoto they would not be supportive of it.

One of the things that struck me when I read the passage about Kyoto in the throne speech was the fact that the government said on the one hand that it would be ratified by Christmas, but on the other hand said that it was consulting right now. How can it decide that it will ratify the thing if it has not even finished consulting yet? It is an insult to the intelligence of Canadians to suggest that it is taking their input seriously if it already decided to go ahead and ratify the thing.

The government is planning on ratifying it without any plan to implement it. How will this work? There is nothing worse than uncertainty. We have individuals and businesses with billions of dollars ready to invest but they have no idea how Kyoto would be implemented. Obviously it will put a chill on investment and those people will withhold those investments until it is clear what is going on.

*The Address*

It is important that the government provide the public with some sense of what the impact of Kyoto would be. How can we have a meaningful debate if we do not know what the impact would be?

Members should consider for a moment what might happen to seniors under Kyoto. If energy prices go up even a little, and they are likely to go up a lot more than a little, what would be the impact on utility costs? Members should remember that the great majority of seniors are on fixed incomes. It is tight for them already. Utility costs are climbing. If Kyoto comes in, what would be the impact on seniors? Those are the sorts of questions that need to be addressed before we go marching forward to ratify the thing. Unfortunately the government seems determined to do exactly that.

Also notable are the things that were not in the throne speech. I spent a week this summer at CFB Wainwright through the Department of National Defence parliamentary outreach. We spent time out in the field and slept on the ground in a tent. I got a good sense of what it is like for the infantry of the Canadian military. It was a fascinating experience. I have tremendous respect for our troops. They are tough, disciplined, and extraordinarily professional, but they do not have the resources.

When we went out there we did live fire exercises and all kinds of things, but in many cases they did not even have enough ammunition to conduct live fire exercises. That is a real concern, especially when we consider what they are being asked to do: engage in peacekeeping roles, go to Afghanistan and perhaps now even go to Iraq. They need those resources but there was no commitment in the throne speech to granting any more resources. That is a disgrace.

• (1315)

The throne speech talked about the issue of health care, which is something that is very important to Canadians. It said that somewhere down the road the Liberals would think about reforming it, but the immediate cash injection needed was not there. Again, the government has different priorities.

When it comes to agriculture, there is one sentence in the throne speech on it. I think it is generally accepted by the Canadian public that agriculture is in deep trouble right now. The government has provided no overarching plan to help us deal with the economic travails of the farmers and ranchers, and there are many, due to subsidies, drought and the fact that the government has put in place institutions that do not allow, for instance, farmers to market their own wheat and barley.

Finally, there is a problem in not addressing the issue of the economy. The world economy today is in desperate straits. The Canadian economy is doing okay but it cannot forever resist the pull and tug of the world economy. Right now the United States is in a difficult situation. There are some people who talk about the world going through a deflationary period and we need to be concerned about that. Unfortunately it is not addressed in the throne speech.

Let me talk a moment about my critic area, human resources development. There were a couple of mentions in the speech about things that the government would do such as scrap the youth employment strategy, which has the spritely acronym of YES. I guess we could say the government is now saying no to YES. The problem with dealing with that approach to dealing with social

problems is the government is putting all the emphasis on the part that really only addresses the concerns of a small percentage of people. What I mean by that is, if the economy is really roaring, that will deal with about 90% of the concerns of ordinary Canadians. It provides a good income, a job, money that can go into an RSP, university and RRSPs for retirement.

Unfortunately the government has put no emphasis on the component of addressing Canada's social problems. Even today, when we have a relatively buoyant economy in a province like Newfoundland, we have unemployment rates of 16%. We need to remember that Newfoundland is one of the provinces that is leading the country in growth. However because of the structure of some of the social programs, including employment insurance, we have created disincentives to labour market attachment or staying employed in the workforce. The government is actually working against some of its goals with some of its social programs. We are very critical of that.

I know I do not have a tremendous amount of time so I will start to wrap it up. While we appreciate that the Prime Minister wants to leave a legacy as he prepares to depart this place after 40 years, we do not feel it should be done on the backs of taxpayers. We do not feel that the Prime Minister really enhances his image by running up a tremendous amount of spending on a bunch of social programs that have been tried for 20 or 30 years and still have not dealt with the issues that they were designed to address.

We think a much better approach would be to address his concerns to the concerns of Canadians. Health care, the military, national security and agriculture are some of the issues my friends over here have mentioned. These things need to be addressed. Unfortunately, they are not being addressed by the Prime Minister in the throne speech.

The result of that is, as we go into a very turbulent future in many respects in terms of the economy and where the world is going with respect to Iraq and the war on terrorism, we do not have a clear path ahead of us. The government has missed a glorious opportunity to put some focus on where the government will go to help us address some of those issues. However it missed that opportunity. Instead we received from the Prime Minister and the government a recycled throne speech, and I regret that very much.

Therefore, it is safe to say that our party simply cannot support either the drift or the specifics of this throne speech.

• (1320)

**Mr. Philip Mayfield (Cariboo—Chilcotin, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate very much the comments of my colleague. I was interested in his comments about disincentives, and he used the example of Newfoundland. We understand that matters of this nature perhaps follow the course of least resistance and when it is easier to get money from programs of the government than to actually go out and get a job that is likely what happens. However I want to ask the member about the circumstances in British Columbia.

*The Address*

Rather than following the course of least resistance, the water running down the hill there has already reached the bottom and is in the puddle. With the softwood trade agreement falling apart, we have thousands of loggers and mill workers who do not have work and yet we cannot get the government to offer any support after the failure of the government to reach a satisfactory agreement with our trading partners.

Would the member comment on this aspect of perhaps that same question?

**Mr. Monte Solberg:** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate my friend's question. It is important to make a distinction between a safety net, which is designed to help people through short periods of time where they become unemployed through no fault of their own, and what really becomes a long term social program that really, in many cases, undermines the goals that the government is setting out to achieve, which ostensibly is to put people back to work and to give them some future and some hope.

What has happened in British Columbia is a good example of where the government has failed. Here we have a situation where the government has blown the trade file and the negotiations with the United States on softwood lumber. As a result, we have thousands of people who are unemployed, people whose livelihoods are in jeopardy and who are on the brink of losing their homes. The trade minister has promised for months that he would be providing some kind of help. That help has not been forthcoming.

On the other hand, we have these programs that simply are not effective and do not work, programs like the seasonal benefits, which I would argue have done more harm than good. Those sorts of benefits would be better addressed helping people through a short term crisis. If there is a crisis in the fishery, give them the benefits in the short run but do not leave them there forever. The same thing applies to softwood lumber. The same thing applies to other sectors of the economy.

Unfortunately, the government seems to have its priorities mixed up.

• (1325)

**Mr. Myron Thompson (Wild Rose, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the hon. member for Medicine Hat for this very fine speech. I will be discussing it with him in further detail when we go to the Say Hay concert together in a couple of weeks, and I appreciate that support.

As we all know, and as the member knows, we are facing the most drastic conditions in Alberta, regarding the drought, than we have ever had in recorded history. It is the worst drought that we can imagine. It has been devastating to a number of farmers in my area and some in the hon. member's area as they abut each other in Alberta.

I want to ask the member this. When we listened to the throne speech, we heard the Prime Minister refer to the great needs in the agricultural sectors of Africa and other foreign countries at least a dozen times, for probably 15 minutes. Then when it came to our own agriculture, there was a tiny 5 or 10 second blurb. What does this tell the member and what does he think it tells our farmers?

**Mr. Monte Solberg:** Mr. Speaker, we should not be surprised, is the first thing I would say. There is one sentence in the throne speech that deals with agriculture in Canada. In the past sometimes there has been no mention at all of agriculture, so we should not be surprised.

However what it underlines is how out of touch the Prime Minister is with where, in particular, the west is at. He seems to have no understanding or comprehension of the values and the needs of the west. To me that is underlined by his misunderstanding of how the west thinks with respect to Kyoto and the same thing with agriculture and the gun control issue. There are a number of issues like that.

It points out the fact to me that the Prime Minister and his cabinet simply do not understand big parts of the country. As a westerner, I will speak about the west. It is important that he does understand it because agriculture is in a serious situation today. We need to have some leadership from the Prime Minister and his cabinet to help us address some of the problems that really afflict agriculture today.

**Mr. Bob Mills (Red Deer, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, there are many areas in the throne speech about which I would like to talk because there are so many deficiencies and reruns of what we have heard before. However I want to emphasize totally the section on climate change and the environment. As the environment critic, I feel that is what I should best address today.

I should first tell the House that my background is in biology. That is the field I was trained in in university. I have been known as an environmentalist probably most of my life. I have studied Kyoto extensively. I attended the Johannesburg conference, and our party does care about the environment. I get a little annoyed when I hear from across the way how we do not care about such things as contaminated sites, air and water and all those issues that are so important to us for life itself.

I also get a little annoyed when I see the hypocrisy from across when projects such as the Sumas power plant are being proposed for the second most polluted air shed in Canada. The government does not even have the nerve to stand before the NEB hearings that start on October 18 to say anything to protect that air shed. That is hypocrisy. It is great to have fine words about the environment and that we are all the good guy, but actions are what really count. There is an example of where they have missed the boat.

A lot of people in Canada wonder what Kyoto is about. The government has forgotten to tell them about Kyoto, and so there are many questions.

If people are asked if they are in favour of protecting the air, they will say yes. However Kyoto is not about the air. Kyoto is about CO<sub>2</sub>. Kyoto is about getting levels to 6% below 1990 levels. Kyoto is about removing 240 million megatons of carbon dioxide from our emissions. We are now between 22% and 30% higher since 1990. The government of course says we will achieve those targets.

This agreement, which started in 1992 with Rio, was basically one of transferring wealth from the north to the south, but we never hear that very often from across the floor.

Let us talk about the reasons for opposing Kyoto. I do not have a lot of time, so I will obviously be summarizing.

*The Address*

First, the developing countries are not part of this. Countries such as China, which is doubling its CO<sub>2</sub> emissions every 12 years, are not part of this agreement. India, Mexico and Brazil, all those developing countries are not there. They represent about 5 billion people who will not even be part of the Kyoto agreement, and yet they say this will really make a difference to the environment.

Then we have this great idea of emissions trading. It is rather interesting that in today's paper the EU in Brussels has been told today by their chief economist that it will be unable to reach its Kyoto targets by the year 2012. The Europeans are the guys who have been pushing this whole thing and have been pushing it on Canada but they cannot meet their targets. What does that say for us?

I have been to the emissions trading seminars. What does this mean? We will send money and we will get credits so that then we can keep putting the CO<sub>2</sub> into the air. Somehow I do not understand how that helps the environment. It seems to me that it is simply again of transfer of wealth and nothing about the environment.

When I have attended those seminars, I have simply said emissions trading equals bureaucracy. Who will do all of that? We get into the sinks. Who will count trees? Who will go out and figure out that the young trees are there and they absorb so much CO<sub>2</sub>, or that older trees do not absorb so much or that this method of farming does that. Will farmers get credit for that or will the government get credit for it? Who will pay the bill for all this?

We do not know what this means. Even they do not know what it means. Ask the Europeans this at some of these international conferences, "What is your thought on sinks?" They look skyward and say, "The science is not really there, but that was kind of a throwaway at Bonn just to keep Canada in the agreement". I do not think that is good enough. As Canadians learn more, I think they will also find the truth out about that.

• (1330)

The government promised that it would have a plan. It said it would have a plan shortly after signing in Kyoto in 1997. In November 1997 in Regina, a week before going to Kyoto, it promised the premiers, "We will have a plan. We will not sign anything before we consult you". Yet one week later the government signed the agreement.

The government promised the industries that they would be fully consulted and would be part of this. Talk to the industries now. Ask them. Every day in the newspaper we read about another industry saying, "We have not been consulted. We will work with the government if we just know what its plan is".

Most important, the people have not been consulted. There were 14 meetings held in June this year, with selected speakers and a prepared list. The media was not allowed access. Is that public consultation? It might be Liberal public consultation but it sure as blazes is not what the people think is being informed about what Kyoto is all about.

It reminds me of Charlottetown. I was involved in fighting the Charlottetown accord. I was doing sometimes as many as six or seven town halls a day against Charlottetown. This was a top down plan conceived in Ottawa with little consultation. Above all, the government forgot to talk to the people about it. It figured the people

would not get involved. The people ordered 12 million copies of the Constitution. The people did get involved and the people defeated the Charlottetown accord.

We are exactly there with Kyoto. The government did not tell the people. It did not consult with the people. A bunch of elites and bureaucrats designed this UN concept of wealth transfer. They did not talk to all the people. It can be defeated as well. It is going down. The EU is saying it cannot achieve them, and Canadian companies and the seniors a member previously talked about, all are reasons that it will not happen.

We need to talk about the costs to Canadians. Canadians are starting to ask what it will cost to ratify Kyoto. It will cost jobs. Even the Prime Minister's secret report from his bureaucrats said it will cost 200,000 jobs. The manufacturers have said it will cost 450,000 jobs in the manufacturing sector, and so on.

What about electricity? Most Canadians do not realize that close to 50% of our electricity comes from coal, which produces the most CO<sub>2</sub> of anything. There is new technology coming but by forcing the ratification of Kyoto. There is no way that electricity costs will not go up. SaskPower a week ago said its rates could go up as much as 25%. A half an hour later, IPSCO had a news conference saying, "If our rates for power go up 25%, we will move our plant to the United States". There will be little benefit to the environment, but a lot of bureaucracy will be created.

What is a better way? A better way is a made in Canada solution, one that involves conservation, one that involves energy efficiency, one that involves setting targets for industry working with industry, and setting targets with people. Transitional fuels, be they biogas from sewage, garbage and feedlots, and ethanol biofuels all have the potential to be a transition to the hydrogen energy of the future. Then we get into alternate energy. It will not be the sole answer, but it will help us to achieve a better and cleaner environment. Whether it is wind, solar, or ultimately fuel cells, at least it will help us get there.

The Canadian government needs to have a vision for the future. It needs to have a vision of where it is going. It needs to get companies onside. It certainly needs to get the provinces onside. It needs to get Canadians onside. That is a better plan.

The plan the government has is no plan. It will not release what it will do. The Prime Minister says he has 10 years to develop it. He has had 10 years since the Rio conference in 1992 and he has had five years since signing in 1997 and he has done absolutely nothing.

Let us tell Canadians we care about the environment, that we want to do something that will make a difference. The throne speech is just more words, more promises and no action.

*The Address*

• (1335)

**Mrs. Karen Redman (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to pose a question to my hon. colleague, who is the Alliance critic on the environment committee. I find his comments somewhat surprising because I know that in his heart he is an environmentalist and it is good to have his hard work on the environment committee.

This past summer, on behalf of the Minister of the Environment, I was able to make an announcement of \$7.9 million into an organization called Fluxnet. It is doing the necessary scientific research to look at good agricultural practices, indeed to look at the very question the member raised in his comments, which is how we deal appropriately with carbon sinks. Clearly, the geography of Canada is somewhat unique. I commend the Minister of the Environment for taking an active and indeed a leadership role during the Kyoto protocol negotiations.

I would ask the member to comment on the fact that we have been consulting since 1997 with all of the stakeholders, including industry, some of which he referred to. Indeed, there are industries that are already ahead of the government in looking at how they can key into this new technology, as well as the new commerce and the potential of carbon trading that we are looking at.

There are four proposals put out by the Canadian government which can be picked up on the environment website. We will be coming out shortly with one of those in order to receive comments. I believe it was of the order of 2,500 people who were involved in the consultations that the member depicted as being very closed. I would see that as being fairly embracing.

I ask the member opposite, in the face of all of these efforts and the fact that I know he is a father and a grandfather, how can he justify not acting on this very important issue?

• (1340)

**Mr. Bob Mills:** Mr. Speaker, the whole point is the fact that the government is not acting, does not have a plan and is going nowhere. As far as consulting 2,500 people, I am sure there are that many people on the Liberal membership list.

With respect to the money, the \$7 million, the U.S. government put forward \$4.6 billion just for fuel cell research. The Danish and German governments are way ahead of us. We have been sitting on our hands for 10 years. We did not even negotiate properly. Australia negotiated 8% above 1990 levels because it has an immigrant population.

We start talking now about clean fuel credits in 2002. That should have been on the table in 1997. We have blown it. Canadians do not understand. If and when they do understand, they will ask for a better way. That will help my grandchildren.

**Mr. Randy White (Langley—Abbotsford, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, my colleague, the opposition critic, mentioned SE2. I would like to ask him a question with regard to that.

SE2 happens to be an American corporation trying to build a generating plant in Sumas, Washington right across from my hometown of Abbotsford, British Columbia. It will be spewing hundreds of tonnes of effluent emissions in the air in the Fraser Valley. The residents have been fighting hard to dislodge this as the

American corporation wants to build a transmission line across our community in Abbotsford to get the plant running. All of our MLAs, myself, all of our local city councils, regional districts, everyone is basically opposed to this. Yet the federal government, through the Minister of the Environment is probably the most silent on the issue. He is conspicuous by his absence.

In view of the throne speech mentioning nothing about the seriousness of issues such as this one, could my colleague possibly shed some light on just why it is that when the issue of emissions in an already overpolluted Fraser Valley comes up, there is absolutely no support? Is it because it is from British Columbia, or is there some other reason?

**The Deputy Speaker:** I will ask the hon. member for Red Deer to respond in the last minute while we are being somewhat distracted by some strange sounds in this place.

**Mr. Bob Mills:** Mr. Speaker, obviously the government does not want to do anything about SE2 because that would require some real action in the second most polluted air shed in Canada.

When I talked to the minister about that, he said, "I am a good friend of the governor. Governor Locke and I are like this and we talk about these issues. I know Governor Locke will not approve this and I know it will not happen", wink, wink, nod, nod, "We will take care of it". That is not the way to have an environmental policy. That is not someone who has a conscience about the environment. That is not the way to act. I say that the environment minister has no environmental conscience.

**Mr. John Maloney (Erie—Lincoln, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am very happy to speak to the subject of the throne speech. I must say that one of the problems I was faced with in preparing for this was trying to pick which aspect of the throne speech I would like to address. It has so many positive aspects and shows the continuing vision of the government as we head well into the next millennium.

The subject I chose to speak about was the issue of children and families. I am pleased to endorse the Government of Canada's continuing agenda with respect to children and families.

The directions outlined in the Speech from the Throne build on the government's sound investment in this area. These new commitments improve and strengthen the programs and services we already have in place for children and families.

Canada's future lies with our children, there is no doubt about that. Their success and Canada's depend on children getting a good start in life. That is why we believe that no investments have a greater payoff than ensuring that children have a good start in life and that families have the tools they need to care for and to nurture their children. No investments do more to maximize the potential of every Canadian. That is why we have committed in the Speech from the Throne to increase our support to families and children and to help poor families to break out of the welfare trap and end the cycle of poverty and dependency.



*The Address*

Our commitment to the children and families of Canada has been an abiding one. Canadians recognize that the country's ability to grow and thrive rests on its ability to nurture the next generation. We know that children need a good start in life if they are to participate actively in society and the economy as they grow up into adulthood. Governments have a pivotal role to play in supporting families to achieve this goal.

In recognition of this role, the Government of Canada in cooperation with the provinces and territories launched the national children's agenda. It sets out a vision to ensure that children in Canada are provided with the right opportunities to realize their full potential. With this vision as a guide, we have built on and introduced policies aimed at giving children the best possible start in life.

The national children's agenda sets out four broad goals for Canada's children: health; safety and security; success at learning; and social engagement and responsibility. It also identifies six potential areas for collaborative action to improve child well-being: supporting parents and strengthening families; enhancing early childhood development; improving economic security for families; providing early and continuous learning experiences; fostering strong adolescent development; and creating supportive, safe and violence-free communities.

Under the auspices of the national children's agenda and acting in unison as Canadians want us to, the federal government and the provinces and territories introduced the national child benefit. Started in 1998 the Government of Canada now invests \$2.5 billion annually to help to reduce and prevent child poverty and to help parents enter the workforce. This is on top of the \$5.4 billion provided in the basic benefit of the child tax benefit.

If we translate this into how it supports individual families, it means that a family of four with two children can receive a maximum benefit of \$4,680 per year. The benefits have been indexed to keep up with the cost of living so that by 2004 the figure will rise to about \$4,800 per year. In the coming months we will be working with our provincial and territorial colleagues to discuss how we can collectively make more progress in addressing the needs of low income families with children. This program puts extra money every month into the pockets of low income families with children. It also provides an incentive to move from welfare to work.

Easing the financial burden and working with poor families leads to better learning environments for their children, more opportunities for the parents to upgrade their skills, and a better chance for the family members to improve their quality of life over all.

The results show that the national child benefit has had success in reducing the incidence of child poverty and reducing the welfare wall for families with children. The "National Child Benefit Progress Report: 2001" contains for the first time results of the direct effect of the national child benefit on the prevention and reduction of child poverty.

• (1345)

I will give one example from the report. In 1999 about 16,500 families with approximately 33,800 children rose out of the low income bracket. These very positive results are expected to improve.

We are proud of the national child benefit program but it is not the only way the Government of Canada is working to support Canadian families and children. Based on the knowledge that experiences from birth to age six are of critical importance for the healthy development and long term outcomes, we have focused our attention on supports for the early years.

In September 2000, the first ministers announced the historical early childhood development agreement. This agreement commits all levels of government to work toward a comprehensive system of services for young children and their families through investments in four key areas: first, pregnancy, birth and infancy; second, parenting and family supports; third, early child development, learning and care; and fourth, community supports.

In this agreement, the Government of Canada is transferring \$2.2 billion over five years to support provincial and territorial investments in early childhood development programs and services for young children and their families.

We are also investing significant funds toward improving early childhood development supports for aboriginal children. These supports include child care, the aboriginal head start programs and support for families caring for children with fetal alcohol syndrome or fetal alcohol effects. Our aim is to provide young aboriginal Canadians with the tools they need to take better advantage of the opportunities Canada has to offer.

Through the early childhood development agreement we are working to ensure that young children can fulfil their potential to be healthy, safe and secure, and that they are ready to learn, be socially engaged and responsible.

The Government of Canada also supports families through the employment insurance family supplement by increasing benefits up to 80% of gross salary for Canadians from low income families with children. Helping Canadians balance family and work responsibility is a priority of the government.

In areas specifically related to children, we have extended parental and maternity benefits under employment insurance from six months to one year. This measure allows parents to spend more time with their babies in the critical first year of life.

Other important changes directed at parents have been made to the EI program. We have increased the flexibility of the payment of parental benefits to parents of newborn or newly adopted children who are hospitalized. We have also ensured that full access to special benefits for mothers who claim sickness benefits before or after their maternity claim. We also adjusted the re-entrant rule for parents in recognition that returning to the workforce can be difficult for parents who have taken extended absences to care for their young children.

*S. O. 31*

Through these changes we are providing parents with greater choices and more options.

However the government understands that Canadians have many caregiving demands and the need for support can arise beyond a child's first year. Workers face particular challenges when a family member falls gravely ill. That is why we are pleased that the Speech from the Throne commits us to improving support to working Canadians so they can provide compassionate care without putting their jobs or incomes at risk.

We also intend to help some of the most vulnerable members of our society, that is those low income families who are caring for severely disabled children. Nobody needs to explain how many such families face additional costs in providing care. As a result, we will take steps to relieve these economic hardships by increasing income support for families caring for children with severe disabilities. We will work with our provincial and territorial partners to ensure these benefits are passed on to the low income families.

With this commitment, we are building on work that has gone before through tax measures for families of children with disabilities. These include: an increase in the disability tax credit from \$4,293 to \$6,000; a raise in the disability tax credit supplement for children with severe disabilities from \$2,941 to \$3,500; an expanded list of eligible expenses under the medical expense tax credit; the provision of a refundable medical expense tax credit to low income earners; and a raise in the child care expense deduction limit for a child with a disability from \$7,000 to \$10,000.

• (1350)

We have taken these measures because we recognize that there are higher costs associated with the care of children with disabilities. We want these families to have the support they need to assist in this care.

Combating child poverty is a major priority of the Government of Canada. This is why during this fiscal year about \$7.9 billion will be invested under the Canada child tax benefit, including about \$2.5 billion under the national child benefit. These benefits are tax free and fully indexed.

In addition to these supports directly to families with children, we also believe that it is our collective responsibility to care for the welfare of our children. With this in mind, we will reform the Criminal Code to increase the penalties for abuse and neglect and provide more sensitive treatment for children who take part in justice proceedings as victims or as witnesses. We will also reform family law by putting greater emphasis on the best interests of the child, expanding the unified family courts and ensuring that appropriate child and family services are available.

With the vision set out in the national children's agenda as a guide, and building on strong foundations to enhance income security, promote healthy early childhood development and provide a safe, secure environment, we are moving toward a comprehensive system of supports for children and families in Canada.

The Speech from the Throne reaffirms our commitment to ensure that no Canadian child suffers from the effects of poverty and that every child in this country is provided with the best start in life.

• (1355)

**Mr. Randy White (Langley—Abbotsford, Canadian Alliance):**

Mr. Speaker, it really disturbs me when they come out with some general, broad, sweeping statements about young people, about where we are going and about how much money we are going to spend; that we are going to end child poverty, and these kinds of things.

I have been working on an issue for a number of years and that is the age of sexual consent. It has been lowered from 16 to 14. I would like to find out from the government's perspective why an issue like this is not important but spending money on other things is. I will give the member the reason.

I have been involved in getting a number of young people out of crack houses. These are kids, girls from the ages of 14, 15 and 16. The police cannot do anything about it because the age of sexual consent is 14. Guys who are 30 and 40 use these kids for sex and for selling drugs. If they get caught breaking the law for selling drugs, they come under the Young Offenders Act. There are all kinds of problems with this age of sexual consent.

Could the member explain why it is not a priority to re-look at this? It is a very important aspect of services to young people.

**Mr. John Maloney:** Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased that the member has brought up this important issue. I am also very pleased that he has seen nothing to criticize in the speech and has chosen to go into another area, the age of consent.

Certainly the age of consent is an area that requires consultations at the federal, provincial and territorial levels. These consultations are ongoing. I would think that in the very near future we may see some initiatives in this regard as far as raising the age of consent. It is an area that has been debated in the House and I hope we will see it on the floor of the House very soon.

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## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[*Translation*]

### WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

**Mr. Gérard Binet (Frontenac—Mégantic, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, October is Women's History Month. This year's theme is "Women and Sports—Champions Forever". During the month, a variety of activities will take place commemorating the successes and the obstacles of sport for girls and women through its history.

Canada has had its share of sports champions, starting with "Canada's sweetheart", Barbara Ann Scott, still the only Canadian woman to have won an Olympic gold medal for senior women's figure skating. Since then, among others, Myriam Bédard, the internationally renowned biathlete with her Olympic gold, and Canada's women's hockey team, with their Olympic gold at the 2002 winter Olympics.

These great athletes have followed their dreams, come hell or high water. Their determination has opened many doors for other female athletes and, today, I wish to pay tribute to the female athletes of yesterday, as well as those of tomorrow.

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[English]

#### BREAST CARE AWARENESS MONTH

**Mrs. Cheryl Gallant (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, October is Breast Care Awareness Month.

Breast cancer continues to be the most frequently diagnosed cancer in Canadian women. This year alone it is estimated that 20,500 new cases of breast cancer will be diagnosed and 5,400 deaths will be attributed to this disease.

Nearly half of all new cases occur among those women aged 50 to 69, as the likelihood of a woman being diagnosed with breast cancer increases rapidly with age. Mammographic screening for women in this age group has been proven to save lives. The earlier the detection the better.

It was my privilege this week to meet with a cancer researcher who has developed a simple blood test that will make detection even quicker. Research dollars are working.

It is through the work of organizations such as the Renfrew County Breast Health Network and their member support groups in Pembroke, Arnprior, Eganville and Barry's Bay that women are being made aware of breast health.

Support for survivors happens in their local communities.

Events are planned throughout the month of October and I encourage all women to become more aware of the resources available in their local areas. Cancer can be beaten.

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• (1400)

#### THE ENVIRONMENT

**Hon. Charles Caccia (Davenport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the ratification of Kyoto announced in Monday's throne speech has spawned false claims, including the loss of 200,000 jobs accompanied by huge investment losses.

We heard the threat of investment loss before with the acid rain program and with the removal of lead from gasoline.

As in the past, investments will continue but in new, less damaging energy forms like natural gas, ethanol and other renewables.

As to jobs, Kyoto opponents forget that jobs will also be created because of new opportunities in renewables, energy efficiency and conservation. Opponents also fail to take into account job losses from not acting on climate change such as the high costs to agriculture because of more frequent droughts, shipping because of lower water levels, or insurance rates because of extreme weather.

*S. O. 31*

This is not the time for fearmongering and false claims. In order to protect the public and private good, the government and parliament will ratify Kyoto and move Canada toward a new energy future.

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[Translation]

#### JULIEN GALIPEAU

**Mr. Serge Marcil (Beauharnois—Salaberry, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to draw attention to the recent victory of a resident of my riding of Beauharnois—Salaberry, Julien Galipeau.

In the weightlifting competition at the Commonwealth Games, held this past July 30 through August 3 in Great Britain, this young man captured silver and bronze medals. Galipeau lifted 192.5 kilograms in the clean and jerk to finish second, and then took a bronze in the overall with a total of 342.5 kilograms.

This victory carries him to the next competition, the senior worlds, to be held November 18 through 26 in Warsaw, Poland.

The 21-year-old Julien is a model of discipline and perseverance for other young people. I congratulate him and wish him the best of luck at the world championships.

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[English]

#### INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

**Mrs. Marlene Jennings (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister for International Cooperation announced today in Calgary the winners for the national Butterfly 208 contest. Mr. Joshua Kertzer from Calgary, Alberta, won the grand prize, a trip to Ecuador where he will visit CIDA supported projects. The three runners-up, Jocelyn McIsaac from Nova Scotia, Bridget Allin from Ontario and Marie Pier Lemieux from Quebec, each won a home computer.

The national Butterfly 208 art and essay contest is for Canadian youth aged 14 to 18 and was organized by the federal government through CIDA. Over 300 students from across the country found innovative ways to express their thoughts and feelings about issues like the HIV-AIDS pandemic, education, child soldiers and world hunger.

I encourage all my fellow parliamentarians to visit the contest website and take a look at what Canadian youth are thinking about international development.

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#### AGRICULTURE

**Mr. David Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, six years ago a group of Canadians made a bid for freedom. They were treated as hardened criminals. They were arrested, charged and jailed, handcuffed and shackled. They were strip searched and humiliated. Their families have been harassed and intimidated, and their property confiscated.

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For six years they have been dragged through the legal system in an attempt to break them financially and to make an example of them. Four weeks from today this group will be jailed.

These people are regular folks: hard-working, law-abiding, salt of the earth, and good neighbours. The crime for which the government has persecuted them is taking a small amount of wheat across the United States border. The manager of this campaign of intimidation and fear sits in the House, the Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board.

Will he finally listen, do the right thing and give these farmers the same opportunity that the rest of Canada has: the right to sell their own wheat? Or is he actually prepared to jail Canadian farmers for marketing their own wheat? The countdown begins. He has four weeks.

\* \* \*

[*Translation*]

#### MARC GAGNON

**Mr. André Harvey (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to honour an exceptional Canadian athlete who, last week, announced his retirement from the national speed skating team.

Marc Gagnon, who is from Chicoutimi, thrilled Canadians at the Salt Lake City Olympic Games when he won several medals, including the gold in the 500 metre race and in the men's relay. Marc has won more medals at the winter games than anyone else in Canada's history.

During his ten years as a member of the national speed skating team, Marc Gagnon has won four gold and two silver medals at world championships. Marc has been a leader on our prestigious short track national team.

On behalf of all Canadians, I thank Marc for his contribution to Canada's success at the international level and I wish him a great deal of success in his future endeavours.

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●(1405)

#### DON CHERRY

**Ms. Christiane Gagnon (Québec, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, in the latest report of the CBC, we are told that "English Television continued to implement its transformation plan to change significantly the face of Canadian public television". Is Don Cherry on *Hockey Night in Canada* the new face that the CBC wants to have?

As regards the delivery of licences, the CRTC provides that "No licensee shall distribute... any abusive comment... that tends to... expose an individual or group... to hatred or contempt on the basis of race, national or ethnic origin".

Do the abusive comments made by Don Cherry toward francophones, European athletes and women not violate the obligations imposed on the CBC by the CRTC, and do they not contribute to lower the level of journalistic ethics?

Moreover, in a ruling on Don Cherry's behaviour, the CBC ombudsman stated that it is his right to call Quebec sovereignists

crybabies. Is this not a sign of intolerance and incomprehension regarding the political opinions that are expressed?

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[*English*]

#### THE ENVIRONMENT

**Mr. Rodger Cuzner (Bras d'Or—Cape Breton, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Prime Minister and the Minister of Canadian Heritage on today's announcement of an action plan to create 10 new national parks and 5 national marine conservation areas and to restore the ecological health of Canada's existing national parks.

This action plan will ensure the protection of some of our nation's most spectacular wilderness and marine areas and ensure that they will be passed on unimpaired to future generations. It is a bold agenda that will be achieved with the cooperation of provincial and territorial governments, aboriginal people, northern and rural communities, and Canadians in general.

It will result in the government taking measures to ensure the long-term health of our 360,000 square kilometres of Canada's rich natural heritage, protected by Parks Canada. To protect the global environment we must act locally. Today's announcement will ensure that through the participation of local people our nation will protect areas critical to national and global ecosystems.

I wish to congratulate the Prime Minister and the Minister of Canadian Heritage for their global leadership on the creation and protection of national parks, an important symbol of our national identity.

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#### JUSTICE

**Mr. Randy White (Langley—Abbotsford, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to announce to the government House leader that the government will soon be tabling sex offender registry legislation.

I wrote the legislation in 2000 modeled after Christopher's bill in Ontario. Credit for this critical legislation must go to: Jim and Ann Stephenson, Christopher's mom and dad; David Griffin, executive director of the Canadian Police Association and all police associations across Canada; victims of crime; the attorneys general of each province, especially Bob Runciman of Ontario and my friend Rich Coleman of British Columbia; the people of Langley—Abbotsford, British Columbia who supported the efforts to lobby for such an important issue; my colleagues in the House of Commons; and the member of Parliament for Cardigan, Prince Edward Island who finally saw the light, swallowed the bitter pill of humility and finally recognized it is more important to be right than partisan.

\* \* \*

#### JIMMY NG

**Mr. Joe Peschisolido (Richmond, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is with sadness that I rise in the House today to express my condolences to the family of Constable Jimmy Ng.

Constable Ng was killed on Sunday, September 15 when a speeding vehicle broadsided his police cruiser. Jimmy was just 32 years old and a six year veteran of the RCMP. He was a promising, dedicated and valued police officer committed to helping others.

On September 21 some 1,200 uniformed personnel travelled to Richmond, British Columbia from across Canada and the United States to pay tribute to Jimmy's memory. Their message to their fallen comrade is one I reiterate in the House today. We must all work together to stop road racing.

On Saturday, October 12 the community of Richmond is organizing a symposium to discuss ways to combat road racing. In the meantime our thoughts and prayers are with Jimmy's family, the Richmond RCMP detachment and with all those who serve our country.

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• (1410)

#### NATIONAL MEMORIAL DAY

**Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg—Transcona, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, last Sunday, September 29 I was present at the opening of a new park in my riding. The park is named after Ronald Houston, a Winnipeg police officer from Transcona who was murdered on duty on June 27, 1970. The opening of the park coincided with Police and Peace Officers' National Memorial Day.

As the MP for Winnipeg—Transcona I wish to pay tribute to the memory and the sacrifice of Ronald Houston, and I am honoured that my riding is the location of what is apparently the first park in Canada named after a police officer. As NDP justice critic I wish to pay tribute to all those who have been killed on duty over the years and whose names are inscribed on the memorial here in Ottawa, especially those whose names tragically had to be added this year.

Finally, not far away from Ronald Houston Park is a street named Alex Taylor Drive. It is named after a former Transcona police chief, my maternal grandfather. His record of service to the community of Transcona is one of which I am very proud, and I wish to pay tribute to him also at this time.

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[Translation]

#### TAXATION

**Mr. Pierre Paquette (Joliette, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, this Monday and Tuesday, the Government of Quebec will be hosting a forum on the fiscal imbalance. Both opposition party leaders have announced that they will attend. Various stakeholders will have an opportunity to learn more about the scope of this phenomenon and to identify the needs that could be met if this injustice were corrected. The reports of both the Séguin commission and the Conference Board were unequivocal in demonstrating the severity of the problem.

Meanwhile, Canada's Minister of Finance has announced an underestimated surplus of \$6 billion and the Speech from the Throne has promised investments that will entail long-term commitments by the government. Does this not demonstrate that the federal government has endless means at their disposal? Also in the Speech from the Throne, the federal government announced investments in health, family and municipalities, all of which are provincial

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jurisdictions. Does this not acknowledge that the needs are really in Quebec and in the provinces?

The affirmative answers to these two questions proves that there is a fiscal imbalance. Because of this imbalance, Quebec is deprived of \$50 million every week. The federal government's stubbornness in denying this reality is another example of the urgent need for Quebec's sovereignty.

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[English]

#### IRAQ

**Mr. Julian Reed (Halton, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is with great concern that I rise for the first time in this second session of the 37th Parliament.

Over the summer many people in my riding made a point of telling me how concerned they were with the level of conflict in the Middle East. The situation with Iraq has become dangerous waters and the United Nations is facing one of its greatest tests. The UN represents a dream, a dream of a world without the scourge of war.

Canada has been determined to ensure that Iraq meets its United Nations disarmament obligations. We must continue to work through the UN and understand the danger posed by unilateral action in the Middle East. We must not abandon the UN. We must work collectively for the world we want and the pursuit of peace.

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#### URBAN AFFAIRS

**Mr. Inky Mark (Dauphin—Swan River, PC):** Mr. Speaker, in 1996 at the Federation of Canadian Municipalities convention in Calgary the Prime Minister acknowledged the importance of municipal governments and that it was time to recognize municipal governments in their own right. To this day, the Prime Minister has not officially recognized municipalities.

There are over 4,400 municipal governments in Canada that are the first order of government, the level of government closest to the people. Yet the Prime Minister refuses to acknowledge the legitimacy of these governments. The federal infrastructure program was really the brainchild of the Canadian Federation of Municipalities. If government programs are to be successfully implemented, the government closest to the people must have a voice at the table and be consulted.

When will the Prime Minister recognize the legitimacy of the first order of government in Canada or will this be just another broken Liberal promise?

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#### WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

**Ms. Aileen Carroll (Barrie—Simcoe—Bradford, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, on Thursday, September 7, the South Simcoe Women's Institute celebrated its 100th anniversary.

### Oral Questions

Adelaide Hoodless founded the first branch of the Women's Institute in southern Ontario in 1897. The Women's Institute is now an international organization and its motto, "For Home and Country", provides an educational forum for women with an emphasis on civics.

Now is the time when governments and organizations throughout North America are searching for ways to enhance the quality of life in our communities, to increase opportunities to bring people together and to further social cohesion. This is one of the primary ways to prevent isolation and fragmentation which too often results in social breakdowns.

I wish to congratulate the South Simcoe Women's Institute for 100 years of strength and leadership.

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• (1415)

### SAY HAY CONCERTS

**Mr. Myron Thompson (Wild Rose, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, as most of us know, it has been a devastating summer for the farmers in Alberta. In my lifetime I have never seen a drought this severe. During this catastrophe the outpouring of support from across the nation has been overwhelming. From hay donations to fundraisers to corporations stepping up to the plate, everyone has helped in their own way.

Today I would like to pay tribute to the organizers of the Say Hay concerts. These benefit concerts will raise funds for drought stricken farmers and ranchers and will take place October 13 in Edmonton and October 14 in Calgary. These concerts hope to raise a million dollars and have shaped up to be one of the biggest Canadian country music events of the year.

I urge each and every one to personally support this endeavour and spread the word throughout the constituencies.

As usual, it is the heart and actions of the average Canadian that unifies this country, not the grand schemes of assistance provided by this government.

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## ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

### ETHICS

**Mr. Stephen Harper (Leader of the Opposition, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I want to ask the Prime Minister about his new ethics package coming out of the throne speech. This package sets a new standard for double standards, an independent ethics counsellor for MPs and their spouses but the current lapdog arrangement for cabinet ministers. What the Prime Minister wants to do is have control over people who do not make the decisions around here and have no control over the people who do make the decisions.

Will the Prime Minister agree to withdraw this proposal?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I cannot withdraw what I have not tabled.

**Mr. Stephen Harper (Leader of the Opposition, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I guess we will see if he intends to proceed with it.

We all know what he is trying to do. He is not fooling anyone. He has scandals and conflict of interest problems with his cabinet and instead of dealing with those he is trying to insist that somehow there are ethics problems with ordinary members of Parliament, and there is not.

If an independent ethics commissioner is good enough for backbench MPs, it should be good enough for the Prime Minister and his cabinet. Will the Prime Minister commit to introducing a truly independent ethics commissioner for all parliamentarians?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, last week the Leader of the Opposition and his party tabled a paper where they were advocating that we have guidelines on ethics for members of Parliament. That was their suggestion which we have not yet implemented.

**Mr. Stephen Harper (Leader of the Opposition, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister continues to avoid withdrawing his own proposal for a double standard between MPs and cabinet ministers.

[Translation]

The Prime Minister is proposing an independent ethics counsellor for backbenchers and their spouses, but a carefully chosen duty counsel for himself and his cabinet.

Will the Prime Minister pledge to withdraw this proposal and propose instead an independent ethics commissioner for all parliamentarians?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, just as in French, in English, I cannot withdraw what I did not propose. So, the member will have to wait. He can criticize our proposal after we have made one. But how could I withdraw it if I have not tabled anything yet? English or French, the answer is the same.

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[English]

### GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS

**Mr. Grant Hill (MacLeod, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, here is one example of why we need an independent ethics commissioner. A senior government official just admitted that he was asked to bend the rules when awarding ad contracts. He said, "I was requested by the Privy Council Office to hire agencies without going through the normal competitive process".

Why is this Liberal government demanding that its employees break the rules?

*Oral Questions*

**Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, back in the middle of May the Prime Minister indicated with respect to the sponsorship program that where there were administrative mistakes, they would be corrected. Where there were overpayments in terms of funds, that money would be recovered. If and when there was any legal wrongdoing, that would be prosecuted under the law.

**Mr. Grant Hill (MacLeod, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, here is the problem with that answer. We now find that the Privy Council Office and the Prime Minister's Office had their hands in this scheme. That is the problem with that answer.

Every parent and every teacher in this country tries to teach their children to not break the rules. Why does the Liberal government do exactly the opposite?

**Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to the comments made by the Prime Minister back in May where he indicated that all matters in respect of the sponsorship program would be thoroughly investigated, certain matters have been referred to the Auditor General, certain matters have been referred to the police and certain matters are subject to internal review, including most recently an administrative review by the deputy minister of my department, to ensure that all requirements of the financial administration act were duly complied with and if they were not, there will be consequences.

• (1420)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, on the subject of sponsorships, yesterday, Charles Guité confirmed that the usual rules for awarding contracts had been bent with the approval of the Privy Council. The former public servant thus confirmed the version given by the Prime Minister, for whom anything goes in the war against sovereignists.

Will the Prime Minister admit that it was his orders that gave rise to an entire system of misuse of public funds and that he himself is the one most responsible for the sponsorship scandal plaguing his government?

[*English*]

**Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister has been among the very first to say that wherever there was wrongdoing it would be pursued, investigated and prosecuted. Administrative mistakes will be corrected. If there were overpayments, they will be recovered and if anyone, that is the word used by the Prime Minister, broke the law there will be consequences.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the minister is right. The Prime Minister is the first to have made such a statement, once the truth was out. As long as nothing was

known, it was to the Prime Minister's benefit; he was the one giving the orders. That is the fact of the matter.

Given Charles Guité's admissions, how can the Prime Minister deny that he is the mastermind behind the entire sponsorship scandal, since he is the one who has allowed it to go on? With all his experience, he is the one at the centre of the scandal.

[*English*]

**Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, again, let me remind the hon. gentleman that as far back as the year 2000 there was an internal audit conducted by the internal audit division of Public Works at the insistence of the deputy at that time. That was followed by an action plan to implement the recommendations of the audit. That was followed by further improvements instigated by my predecessors, followed by the complete review, the references to the Auditor General and the police activity of this year.

In all respects every dimension of this file is being pursued and properly pursued.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, Mr. Guité could not have said it any more plainly. He acted illegally because he was at war, and he acted with the approval of the Federal-Provincial Relations Office, which has a direct line to the Prime Minister's office. These words are very clear.

Will the Prime Minister admit that his blind determination to defeat sovereignists caused him to dispense with the most elementary caution and depart from the normal rules of proper public management, and that he has become the person who allowed this entire scandal to go on?

[*English*]

**Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is rather easy to make such allegations within the protection of the privileges of this House. Obviously the Government of Canada has worked very hard to ensure all Canadians, including Canadians in Quebec, that this country is strong and unified and welcoming to all Canadians. That included activities with respect to sponsorships. However it also included action in the House with respect to regional vetoes. It included recognition of distinct society, and of course the clarity bill.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister has been in politics for 40 years; he is sufficiently familiar with the rules and the lines that must not be crossed. Yet he allowed the system to go on, he gave his support to the officials involved and, when necessary, he shifted the ministers who were in hot water.

If he is so set against a public inquiry, is it not because the focus would quickly shift all the way up to him?

*Oral Questions*

[English]

**Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have already indicated the various levels of inquiry and investigation that are already underway with respect to this matter. There is absolutely no evidence that the Prime Minister instructed or condoned in any way the violation of any rules or laws. In fact what the Prime Minister has done is to fight for this country with every ounce of his being for the last 40 years, and that deserves and enormous amount of thanks.

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• (1425)

**NATIONAL REVENUE**

**Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg—Transcona, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance. While we debate the usual stuff here, many Canadians with disabilities are fearful of what the government is up to by way of proposed amendments to the Income Tax Act having to do with disabilities.

I want to ask the Minister of Finance this. Is he prepared to get up now, today, in the House and say that the government will drop this cruel nonsense of making the definition of disability even harsher than it is already?

**Hon. John Manley (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in the Speech from the Throne just the other day the government said that it would put in place targeted measures for low income families caring for severely disabled children to help them meet the needs of the child and the family. That is on top of about a 70% increase in the amount that has gone out under the disability tax credit over the past three years.

Rather than tightening, we have seen a broadening of those able to access the disability tax credit.

**Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg—Transcona, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I am surprised with the Minister of Finance. He usually shows more respect for the content of the question. I asked the minister about the proposed amendments.

Many members on his side of the House in response to repeated questioning from this side of the House during the throne speech debate have said that these proposed amendments are wrong. There was a committee in March that recommended that the definition of disability be made less harsh. Everyone agrees except the Minister of Finance.

Will he respect the wishes of the members of the House and drop these proposals now?

**Hon. John Manley (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I understand what the member is asking. He is asking about a very targeted area which was determined in the view of the department to broaden the definition quite considerably beyond that which was intended.

A number of members of Parliament have raised this issue with me. I have agreed with them that we will review it very carefully.

It is important for us to pursue a broadening and deepening of the disability tax credit to ensure that the benefits flow to those who

truly need it, and not that we allow it to flow to people who perhaps do not.

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**GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS**

**Right Hon. Joe Clark (Calgary Centre, PC):** Mr. Speaker, the RCMP is conducting an investigation into who broke the law in the Groupaction case. The other issue is who gave the orders.

Chuck Guité has now told *The Globe and Mail* that he was acting on instructions when he broke the rules and hired Groupaction. Who gave those instructions? Was it the then secretary to the cabinet, Ron Bilodeau? Was it Jean Pelletier or Jean Carle or someone else in the PMO? Which minister authorized the decision to abandon the normal competitive process in hiring Groupaction?

**Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I indicated earlier in the spring that there were serious difficulties with the sponsorship program which needed to be corrected.

A whole series of corrective actions have indeed been launched. A departmental review by my officials examined 720 files over the course of the summer. A report will be forthcoming on all of that very shortly. The Auditor General will be doing a government wide audit of all sponsorship and advertising matters. The cases that have raised legal questions have always been referred to the police.

There is a whole series of activities that is underway to get to the bottom of all of this.

**Right Hon. Joe Clark (Calgary Centre, PC):** Mr. Speaker, someone in the government is trying to hang public servants out to dry. We heard the fog from the Minister of Public Works. He tries to deny there was any wrongdoing. We know there was wrongdoing. They are trying to blame public servants.

Which minister gave the instructions? Which minister has the guts to stand up in the House of Commons and tell the public what instructions he or she gave in the Groupaction case?

**Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have said very clearly and the Prime Minister has said very clearly that all matters in this file would be thoroughly investigated. The administrative errors will be corrected. The overpayments will be recovered. Wherever there is wrongdoing, that will be prosecuted according to law.

**Mr. Kevin Sorenson (Crowfoot, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Solicitor General. We have learned, through access to information, that Everett Roche, a chartered accountant and the Solicitor General's official agent in the 1997 and 2000 election, was awarded a sole source contract to provide advice to senior departmental officials on criminal justice issues.

Can the Solicitor General justify hiring his old political friend, a chartered accountant, at a rate of \$975 per day, up to \$140,000?



*Oral Questions*

•(1430)

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, all I can do for my hon. colleague is get the information and report back to him. If the department hired somebody for some information, that was a decision of the department.

**Mr. Kevin Sorenson (Crowfoot, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, we have seen a record of friends and contracts and dollars. The 2001-02 sole source contract of Everett Roche was retroactively amended and then extended for an additional year. The amended contract specified that he was to submit monthly reports, a clause that was not in the initial contract.

Will the Solicitor General admit that for a full year his official agent was paid up to \$70,000 without receiving written reports to prove that any work was ever completed?

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as I said before, what I will do is find out from the department exactly what was required, what he was hired to do, and report back to the member.

[Translation]

**Mr. Robert Lanctôt (Châteauguay, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Immigration denies all involvement in the hiring of Everest to organize his tour when he was secretary of state.

Yet a fax dated March 17, 2000 from the director of the national sport policy task force to the contract officer at Heritage reads as follows:

The firm the secretary of state wants hired is Everest. They have a standing offer with Public Works Canada. I have no other details. I would like to meet with them to see what expertise they have to offer.

What is the Minister of Immigration's explanation for this?

[English]

**Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the contract in this particular case was awarded according to the rules by my department, on behalf of the Department of Canadian Heritage, to deal with certain matters having to do with amateur sport.

I take it from the hon. gentleman's question that he is asking for some details with respect to the firm's expertise in relation to the project that was undertaken. I will make the appropriate enquiries and report back to him.

[Translation]

**Mr. Robert Lanctôt (Châteauguay, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Immigration is denying any involvement in the hiring of Everest. Yet the contract was awarded to this company, which was not on Canadian Heritage's list.

Of necessity, someone intervened here. If it was not the secretary of state, directly or indirectly, it must have been the heritage minister who intervened on his behalf.

How else can the minister justify the hiring of Everest, when no one in his department was familiar with this company?

[English]

**Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is my information that the firm was indeed on a standing offer list and that the firm appeared on that list as a result of a fully competitive process according to the rules that are applied for contracting with the Government of Canada.

**Mr. Gerry Ritz (Battlefords—Lloydminster, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, the Solicitor General is pleading ignorance that his friend and official agent received a \$140,000 windfall. His pleading ignorance does not surprise us at all, but what we cannot understand is how he thinks he can bend and twist Treasury Board guidelines to this extent and get away with it. How can he explain that?

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as I indicated before in the House, what I will do is find out what he actually did for my department and I will report back to him and—

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for Battlefords—Lloydminster.

**Mr. Gerry Ritz (Battlefords—Lloydminster, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, how could the Solicitor General have his department extend the contract, retroactively double the money and not know what his friend was doing? He was his official agent and his buddy.

He cannot stand there bald-faced and tell us he did not learn from his other colleague, the former minister of defence, that one cannot hire one's friends with taxpayer money like this and get away with it. How can he justify this?

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, all I can tell my hon. colleague is that I will find out the information from the department and make sure he is fully aware as to what this individual did.

\* \* \*

•(1435)

[Translation]

**ETHICS COUNSELLOR**

**Mr. Pierre Brien (Témiscamingue, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister is getting ready to introduce a new ethics bill. Will the Prime Minister tell the House that, regardless of the formula selected, the ethics counsellor will report to Parliament and nobody else?

**Hon. Don Boudria (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the member is asking us to comment on a document which has not been tabled. Naturally, if it has not been tabled, it cannot be commented on.

We all know that some excellent work was done a few years ago by a parliamentary committee chaired by the excellent member for Kingston and the Islands. Naturally, as we indicated in June, we intend to submit this document to parliamentarians.

**Mr. Pierre Brien:** Mr. Speaker, the minister himself commented on this bill right here, outside the House. It might perhaps be interesting for him to tell us about it too.

*Oral Questions*

Can we have a guarantee that all parliamentarians, the Prime Minister and ministers included, will come under one ethics counsellor, a truly independent counsellor, contrary to what we are hearing, which is that ministers and the Prime Minister will come under a different regime, where the counsellor will not be independent?

**Hon. Don Boudria (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I spoke to my colleagues in all political parties in May and June about the excellent report produced under the leadership of the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands. I am surprised that the hon. member is not familiar with the contents. Most of us learned it practically by heart, given the excellence of the work done at the time.

\* \* \*

[English]

**GUARANTEED INCOME SUPPLEMENT**

**Mr. Larry Spencer (Regina—Lumsden—Lake Centre, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, the government made a deliberate policy decision to deny our poorest and most vulnerable seniors access to the guaranteed income supplement they were eligible for. It has already accepted responsibility and settled one case with an elderly widow.

Could the minister tell Canadians how many billions of our tax dollars her department has put at risk as a result of this massive administrative and policy foul-up?

**Hon. Jane Stewart (Minister of Human Resources Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, on the contrary, it has never been the intention of the government to deny seniors access to very important benefits like the guaranteed income supplement.

The hon. member will know that as of late there have been over 100,000 documents sent to seniors who may well be eligible for this supplement. They have returned their forms and I can say that over 70,000 will now be in receipt of that vital supplement.

**Mr. Larry Spencer (Regina—Lumsden—Lake Centre, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, we know that there are at least two class action suits that have already been filed against HRDC and the Solicitor General. We know that an analyst's study said that the minister knew the names and addresses of thousands of potential GIS recipients all along and failed to adequately inform them.

My question: If she knew all along who the potential GIS recipients were, why did the minister refuse to adequately inform these seniors of their right to apply for the guaranteed income supplement?

**Hon. Jane Stewart (Minister of Human Resources Development, Lib.):** Again, Mr. Speaker, let me clarify for the hon. member that as a result of a new relationship between my department and the information that is held by the Minister of National Revenue, we have been able to better identify seniors who may be eligible for the guaranteed income supplement but in the past have not applied.

It is because of this new relationship and a sharing of information that is appropriate and responsive to personal information and its protection that we have identified these seniors and have

corresponded with them directly so that they can have access to the benefit.

\* \* \*

**ETHICS**

**Mr. Alan Tonks (York South—Weston, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the government House leader. I have to come back to the so-called ethics package. It is evident that members from both sides of the House have concerns with respect to a code of conduct for parliamentarians.

Would the government House leader please update the House on when the government will introduce legislation that will reflect the concerns that have been raised by members of the House?

**Hon. Don Boudria (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for the excellent question that he has raised this afternoon about this issue that is important for all of us.

As I indicated a while ago, the government of course said in May and June and repeated again in the throne speech that it intends to proceed with such a document, reflecting, of course, the views of all members of Parliament in the House and with the new-found interest, at least last week, of the Leader of the Opposition.

\* \* \*

● (1440)

**HEALTH CARE**

**Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis (Winnipeg North Centre, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, there has been an incredible proliferation of private, for-profit health clinics in Canada in recent times. In fact private MRI clinics have increased over 800% in the last five years.

The health minister has the authority and indeed the responsibility to investigate these clinics for potential violations of the Canada Health Act, particularly given the likelihood of queue jumping and other threats to our public health system.

Has the health minister done so and will she table the results of her investigations in the House?

**Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we do in fact make inquiries. Whenever a concern is brought to our attention we monitor the situation very closely for possible violations of the Canada Health Act. We in fact work closely with provincial officials. We require information in many cases. I must say that the information is generally forthcoming. If there continue to be concerns that I may have in relation to the operation of a clinic, be it in relation to queue jumping or other things, we pursue that further and if necessary I take it up with my provincial counterpart to ensure that we are able to resolve the concern.

## FOREIGN AFFAIRS

**Mr. Svend Robinson (Burnaby—Douglas, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is for the Minister of Foreign Affairs. On June 13 this year the Senate passed a motion calling upon the Government of Canada to recognize the 1915 genocide of the Armenians and to designate April 24 of every year hereafter throughout Canada as a day of remembrance for the 1.5 million Armenians who fell victim to the first genocide of the 20th century.

I ask the minister: Will the government now finally join with the French government and many other elected bodies around the world and support this long overdue recognition of the Armenian genocide?

**Hon. Bill Graham (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member will recall that when this was last debated in the House the parliamentary secretary made a statement to the House which clearly indicated that the government shares with the people of Armenia the sorrow as a result of the terrible tragedy and loss of life in those awful circumstances during the course of the breakup of the Ottoman Empire.

I met recently with the Speaker of the Armenian legislature, who was here, and with various Armenian members of their legislature. We continue to examine this question. The Armenian people know that the government sympathizes with their cause and sympathizes with the suffering they had, and we will continue in that line.

\* \* \*

## GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURES

**Mr. Rex Barnes (Gander—Grand Falls, PC):** Mr. Speaker, as my hon. colleague pointed out yesterday, the government is cutting benefits for Canada's disabled while wasting millions on new Challenger jets.

The government's own officials, including the assistant deputy minister of public works and the deputy minister herself, have stated that the Prime Minister's personal demand for the purchase of new Challenger jets was unnecessary.

Could the Prime Minister point to one department official at his level or any level who recommended to him that the purchase was in fact a necessity?

**Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is perfectly appropriate for Canadians to scrutinize every government expenditure. That is why we have our very elaborate process for reporting on those expenditures, and it is important for government to be able to balance a whole range of priorities all at the same time. Investing in aircraft is one of those priorities, but so also are health care, where we invest \$29 billion every year, children, \$7 billion every year, innovation, \$7.5 billion every year, and aboriginals, more than \$6 billion. The government has very balanced priorities.

**Mr. Rex Barnes (Gander—Grand Falls, PC):** Mr. Speaker, while the cabinet ignores advice from its own officials, wasting millions of taxpayers' dollars on Liberal luxuries, rural Canada is actually being forgotten.

## Oral Questions

I can guarantee that the people of Gander—Grand Falls do not want jets. They want jobs. The Prime Minister twice misinformed the Canadian people on this issue, first when he stated that the purchase decision was made on the advice of officials and second when he stated that the rules were all followed in granting the contracts.

Now his own minister says that the government was not sued only because the deadline had passed. When is the Prime Minister going to come clean about these Challengers and give the public what it deserves—the truth?

**Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, indeed the records show that all of the rules were properly followed in this transaction to acquire the aircraft. The government needs to address those priorities like it does have to address all of the other priorities, including job creation, in Atlantic Canada and elsewhere.

I am very pleased that in the most recent financial information released by the Minister of Finance he indicated that Canada does in fact today enjoy the best job creation growth record in all of the G-8.

\* \* \*

● (1445)

## GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS

**Mr. Monte Solberg (Medicine Hat, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I want to quote from the contract with the Solicitor General's official agent. It states:

Payments will be made to the Contractor upon receipt of an invoice and approved by the Executive Assistant to the Solicitor General of Canada.

Does the Solicitor General really expect the House to believe that he is unaware of a contract between his official agent and his department, a contract that his own executive assistant has to sign off on?

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as I have said a number of times, I will get the details from my department and inform the House of the details.

**Mr. Monte Solberg (Medicine Hat, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, it is a good thing that the Solicitor General is sitting between two lawyers because he is going to need them.

The situation is unbelievable. The minister is trying to convince the House that he is unaware of a contract with someone who was twice his official agent, a contract that his own executive assistant, who is probably sitting in the lobby, has to sign off on. Why does the minister not come clean and simply tell us the details of this sordid contract?

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I never said I was unaware. What I told my hon. colleague was that I will get the—

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

**The Speaker:** Order, please. We have to be able to hear the minister's answer.

*Oral Questions*

[Translation]

Order, please. There are other questions. The hon. member for Mercier. We need to be able to hear.

\* \* \*

**IRAQ**

**Ms. Francine Lalonde (Mercier, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the proposed resolution made public yesterday by the United States seriously weakens the UN's role in resolving the conflict in Iraq. First, inspectors will be accompanied by American soldiers; second, it will be up to member states, not the UN, to decide if Iraq is demonstrating goodwill or if force is necessary.

Now that it knows the American position, does the government still support the U.S. resolution?

**Hon. Bill Graham (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as the member is fully aware, this is a draft resolution that was given to the media. We have not yet received the official version.

This resolution will be debated at the Security Council. Once the Security Council makes a decision, because it is up to the council to decide, we have said that the Government of Canada will support the Security Council's decision on the conditions involved in sending inspectors into Iraq.

**Ms. Francine Lalonde (Mercier, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, France is opposed to the idea of giving carte blanche to any country to launch a war against Iraq. Russia says that it will not support any resolution unless the inspectors deemed it useful to their work.

How is it that Canada can claim that it wants the UN to maintain its key role in resolving international crises, when it supports a position that essentially sidelines the UN?

**Hon. Bill Graham (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, if the Security Council passes the resolution, then it will be the Security Council that will have decided. So, we will support the Security Council. However, the member does not know what the outcome of that debate will be. Let us wait to see what the Security Council decides. The Government of Canada will support the Security Council after it makes its decision.

\* \* \*

[English]

**GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS**

**Mr. James Rajotte (Edmonton Southwest, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I want to give the Solicitor General an opportunity to clear up the matter of this contract here and now.

Will he state for the record when he became aware of the contract with his two time official agent that was signed off on by his own executive assistant?

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as I said many times, I will get the details and make the member aware.

● (1450)

**Mr. James Rajotte (Edmonton Southwest, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, that is completely unacceptable. He just said that he was unaware and a moment ago he said that he was aware.

It is incumbent upon him as a minister of the House to stand up and state when he became aware of this contract. When did he become aware of a contract with his own official agent that was signed off on by his own executive assistant?

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as I said to my hon. colleague, when I get the details I will make the member aware of the details.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**GOVERNMENT ON-LINE INITIATIVE**

**Ms. Diane St-Jacques (Shefford, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Speech from the Throne delivered on Monday does not mention the Government On-Line initiative. Earlier this week, it was reported by some media that the Government of Canada was about to set aside this important initiative and replace it with an agenda more closely related to social issues.

Could the President of the Treasury Board and minister responsible for the Government On-Line initiative tell us about the government's intentions? Does she intend to implement the GOL by the year 2005?

**Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for Shefford for raising an issue that is important to our fellow citizens.

Yes, our government maintains its commitment to become an e-government by the year 2005. We allocated moneys in the year 2000 budget to achieve this objective within five years. Incidentally, Canada has been recognized as a leader in e-government initiatives, because our public-based approach. Main services will be provided online by 2005, and I hope that parliamentarians will take a close interest in this issue.

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[English]

**GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS**

**Mr. Chuck Strahl (Fraser Valley, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, the Solicitor General said that he will get back to the House as soon as he knows what is going on, but the details that we know about so far today are not very encouraging.

What we know so far is that his official agent was given an untendered contract. We know that his executive assistant had to sign off on that contract. We know that the Solicitor General earlier today admitted that he knew there was a contract but that he just did not know what was in the contract.

When did he find out that his official agent for the last two elections was given an untendered contract in his department?

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, what I have said many times and what I will say again is that I will go back to my department, get the details and then make them available.

**Mr. Chuck Strahl (Fraser Valley, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, that is hardly an adequate answer.

*Oral Questions*

When the Solicitor General's executive assistant signed off on this contact to his official agent and friend, did he give the Solicitor General any advice about potential conflicts of interest? Did a light bulb not come on over there that this was following a pattern typical of the government?

Why did the Solicitor General and his department give an untendered, sole source contract to a friend and official agent of the Solicitor General? What were they thinking about?

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.):** All I can tell my hon. colleague, Mr. Speaker, is that I will get the details and make them available.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**OFFICIAL LANGUAGES**

**Mr. Benoît Sauvageau (Repentigny, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, this morning, the Commissioner of Official Languages reminded us of the government's slowness and apathy regarding the issue of official languages. While urgent action is needed, the minister responsible is suggesting that he may postpone until this winter the tabling of his action plan, which we have been waiting for two years.

How does the Prime Minister explain this new delay in the tabling of the action plan, considering that the Commissioner of Official Languages is increasingly insistent in condemning the slowness, lack of leadership and apathy of this government in the area of official languages?

**Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the government is very receptive to the report of the Commissioner of Official Languages. We are pleased to note the commissioner's new approach to also recognize examples of leadership and success. This week's Speech from the Throne clearly demonstrated the government's commitment to revitalizing our whole official languages program.

Rest assured that an action plan will be tabled in the near future.

\* \* \*

[English]

**GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS**

**Mr. Stephen Harper (Leader of the Opposition, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I am going to try again with the Solicitor General. This man is responsible for important security matters. We expect a half answer to an intelligent question

He said earlier that he was aware of this contract. We can get the details later and we will get them. Why does he not just come clear with us and tell us when he became aware of this contract?

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, all I can do is tell my hon. colleague what I have told his other colleagues. I will get the details and I will make the members aware of the details when I receive the details.

• (1455)

[Translation]

**REGULATORY FRAMEWORK**

**Mr. Richard Marceau (Charlesbourg—Jacques-Cartier, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, this past August 12, in London, Ontario, the Minister of Justice said that there has never been an Enron-style scandal in Canada. He went on to say that the government must be prepared to act should this become necessary.

How can the present Minister of Justice say such a thing when, during his time as Minister of National Revenue, he himself refused to cooperate with the RCMP in the Cinar affair, thus enabling the Cinar officials to escape any criminal charges?

**Hon. Martin Cauchon (Minister of Justice, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is always easy to make such insinuations when under the protection of parliamentary immunity. I also said in London—which essentially repeated in the throne speech—that, in light of what happened in the United States, we in Canada are currently engaged in reviewing the entire regulatory framework.

Naturally, this involves all of the provinces and the various bodies concerned by this regulatory framework, as well as the Canadian government. We are revisiting the Canada Business Corporations Act and also looking into whether the criminal code provides sufficient coverage for a situation of this kind.

Consultations are under way at this time. If something needs to be done, as a responsible government, we will take action.

\* \* \*

[English]

**NATIONAL REVENUE**

**Mr. Peter Stoffer (Sackville—Musquodoboit Valley—Eastern Shore, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the government's legacy will be that it took money away from the most vulnerable in our society and turned it into corporate jets for the Prime Minister's luxury.

Last March the committee studying this issue and backbench Liberals were all saying that the proposed changes to the disability tax credit were reprehensible and very regressive.

Why is the government picking on the most vulnerable in our society? Will the Prime Minister stop these changes and give the money back to these people who so rightly deserve it?

**Hon. John Manley (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the member for Winnipeg—Transcona asked the same question earlier and the answer remains the same.

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**GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS**

**Right Hon. Joe Clark (Calgary Centre, PC):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Solicitor General. He surely does not need his department's help to tell him when he was first personally made aware of the contract with his former official agent, and he does not need anybody else's help to tell him when he was first personally made aware that no work was delivered for the contract.

*The Address*

Why does he not stand now and tell us when he knew about the contract, when he knew it had not been honoured and why the contract was given?

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, does my hon. colleague expect me to know all the details of a contract? What I have said and what I will continue to say is that I will get the information and the information will be made available.

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**FINANCE**

**Mr. Charlie Penson (Peace River, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, it is obvious that we are not going to get any answer today out of the Solicitor General. I wonder if he realizes how weaselly this sounds.

I have a question for the finance minister. Instead of clearing the air yesterday, the Minister of Finance evaded my questions about whether he was going to hike the GST or raise some other tax to pay for misplaced Liberal priorities contained in Monday's throne speech. I want to give him one more chance to clear the air. Will he rule out tax increases, yes or no?

**Hon. John Manley (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is clear enough. We are not planning an increase in the GST. We are not planning an increase in taxes. We are planning a decrease in taxes; this year alone, \$20 billion. That is the tax plan.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS**

**Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, what I would like to know from the Minister of Canadian Heritage is whether, in March of 2000, the Everest Group was on the list of companies to which his department could award contracts.

[English]

**Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, questions were asked earlier about the qualifications of this particular group and the standing offer list upon which they appeared by way of a competitive process. I have undertaken to get the details of that and I will report back to the House.

\* \* \*

● (1500)

**BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE**

**Mrs. Carol Skelton (Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, it being Thursday it is my duty at this time to ask the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons what business he has for this afternoon, tomorrow and the following week?

**Hon. Don Boudria (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this afternoon we will continue with the address debate. This evening

pursuant to the all party agreement, as amended yesterday, we will continue with any uncompleted portion of the debate involving Iraq.

Tomorrow, barring anything else and I will get back to that in a minute, we will begin discussing the motion in my name respecting the resumption of unfinished business from the previous session. If this is completed tomorrow or when it is completed we will then turn to the nuclear safety bill.

We are at the beginning of a session so the numbers were only introduced today but I do believe that bill is Bill C-4. This will be followed by the bill respecting Yukon. Both bills were introduced today. We will continue with this business early next week.

On Tuesday we will return to the address debate which we will also consider on Wednesday and Thursday of next week.

Should there be successful negotiations later this day on the issue of the motion for resumption of unfinished business from the previous session I will obviously at that point rise in my place and modify the business statement that I have just announced because it would need to be modified.

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**SPEECH FROM THE THRONE**

[Translation]

**RESUMPTION OF DEBATE ON ADDRESS IN REPLY**

The House resumed consideration of the motion for an address to Her Excellency the Governor General in reply to her speech at the opening of the session, of the amendment and of the amendment to the amendment.

**Mr. Réal Ménard (Hochelaga—Maisonnette, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to add my comments to the reply to the Speech from the Throne. You will agree with me that it would be generous to say that this was not a very substantial Speech from the Throne. As for all of the speculation in the media during the weeks leading up to the Speech from the Throne, there were many disappointments.

At issue is really what was not found in the Speech from the Throne. For example, we might have expected that the Minister of Justice, who spoke earlier, would be tabling a bill to reform the Canadian Human Rights Act. We will recall that a reform of the Canadian Human Rights Act has been promised ever since June 2000. Let us not forget that in these times when we all want to address poverty, there is something that the federal government can do, something that would not require huge spending commitments. I am talking about amending the Canadian Human Rights Act to include social condition as a prohibited ground of discrimination.

Eight provinces have included a prohibited ground known as social condition in their human rights codes, Quebec having led the way in 1997. This truly ensures that no person is discriminated against based on their status as an individual.

We were expecting reforms to employment insurance, obviously. We know that when most of us were elected, in 1993, UI was an insurance program that allowed half of the workforce to qualify for protection between two jobs.

*The Address*

Today, nearly one third of the workforce does not qualify for employment insurance. And yet, there were a bunch of Liberals who said that they would work to improve the program during the 2000 election campaign.

Which of them managed to capture the ear of the government? Which of them was the voice of workers? None of them, because there are no measures in the Speech from the Throne to improve the lot of people who depend on seasonal jobs, the lot of those who fail to qualify for employment insurance. Let us tell it like it is, this is definitely not a concern for this government.

Of course, we would also have expected more concrete action in terms of health care. Members all know how things stand right now, and I have talked about it in the House a few times.

Mr. Speaker, I think I have already indicated to you that I wish to split my time with the hon. member for Rosemont—Petite-Patrie. I am sure the House will have no objection. I would be grateful if you could let me know when my 10 minutes are up, so that my colleague from Rosemont—Petite-Patrie, with his usual eloquence, can take over and talk about the environmental assessment and decontamination legislation. However, the topic he will address is entirely up to him.

If the Quebec government wanted to provide the exact same health services it was providing in 2001 and 2002, it would need to invest 5% more in the health care and social services system. This would have to be a cumulative increase. This is why, at the first ministers meeting in September 2000, delegates went over what would be needed to keep up with the increase in health care expenditures.

The Prime Minister and all of the first ministers of Canada, whether they represent a Conservative, NDP or, like Bernard Landry, a PQ government, agreed that there was just one way for the health care services the provinces must provide to be maintained, and that would be for the federal government to reinvest in the integrity of our health care system.

As members know, since the government took office in 1993-94, more than \$42 billion were slashed from the transfer payments to the provinces.

• (1505)

If this government cares about social justice, if it cares about the major challenge which consists in maintaining people, particularly the elderly, in their natural community as long as possible, the least it can do is invest in health.

As members know, we no longer talk about the old. Those who look after their health, as does the hon. member for Burnaby—Douglas, who does not smoke or drink and is in good health, have a very good chance of living to be 80, 85 or 90. I wish him a long life and I hope that his fellow citizens will keep him in office the whole time.

That is why we must invest in health and prevention. We must reorganize the health system so that services are not provided in institutions but in the individual's natural community. This is what home support is all about.

So, there is very little for the health system, but there is the federal government's will to develop new programs. What a surprise it was to hear about the federal government's plans to implement a national day care program.

The government wants to interfere in an area over which it has no jurisdiction at all, with its early childhood initiative for children aged zero to five years. This is not incumbent on the federal government. Early action is indeed necessary. The major factors that influence health come into play between the ages of zero and three years. If we succeed in providing early stimulation and ensure the development of healthy nutritional habits, if there is intellectual stimulation, if a healthy lifestyle is promoted in early childhood, when infants are still nursing, these children will grow up to live longer and healthier lives.

We are also surprised to see that in spite of the agreement signed with Minister Harel, a great lady in Quebec politics, as everyone knows, in spite of the devolution of powers and the manpower agreement that was signed, the federal government is about to get step in the whole area of apprenticeships and also wants to interfere in the manpower training sector.

What would we have expected from the hon. member for Laval East? We would have expected her to be, within the Liberal caucus, the voice to say that the government has no business meddling with manpower training. We would have expected her to represent the Quebec consensus and call for the transfer of the Canada Youth Strategy.

The federal government having tools to interfere in the Canada Youth Strategy does not make much sense. The greatest challenge that I am putting to the Minister of Justice is to make the commitment, before 3.30 today if possible, to table the reform to the Canadian Human Rights Act.

Would it not be great if the justice committee could follow up on the La Forest report, after the former judge, recommending that social condition be included in the Canadian Human Rights Act and that mechanisms be put in place—

**An hon. member:** He is a former justice of the Supreme Court.

**Mr. Réal Ménard:** That is right. He is a former justice of the Supreme Court.

The report was released in 2000. It has been in the hands of the government for two years.

Several parliamentarians, including myself—and I am sure the hon. member for Laval East will add her voice to mine—will say that human rights are extremely important in Canada. We must facilitate the establishment of more efficient mechanisms to accelerate the process and to ensure that the Canadian Human Rights Commission has more resources.

Since my time has expired, I will gladly turn the floor over to my colleague from Rosemont—Petite-Patrie. Members must listen carefully to what he will tell us with regard to the environment.

*The Address*

• (1510)

**Ms. Carole-Marie Allard (Laval East, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask a question to my colleague. I read eloquent articles in *Le Devoir* concerning his position on the drug addiction issue and, particularly, on the decriminalization or rather the legalization of marijuana.

Could my colleague clarify somewhat his thoughts on what the throne speech says on this?

**Mr. Réal Ménard:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for her good question.

The Bloc Québécois was in favour of decriminalization very early on. The leader of the Bloc Québécois, the hon. member for Rosemont—Petite-Patrie, who tabled a motion on this in the House, and I think that it is undesirable and unacceptable that, in 2000, there are young people, and not so young people, who get a criminal record for simple possession of marijuana. Indeed, we applaud the government initiative and we will see what will come of it.

However, in the throne speech, it seemed to me that the government was committed to proceed with decriminalization. I am sure that all members will remember that the person who took the lead, who acted early on, who was the instigator on this issue, is the one and only member for Rosemont—Petite-Patrie. In 1997-98, he tabled a motion in the House, following representations made by one of his fellow citizens. He was a leader on this, and we will continue to follow his lead.

[*English*]

**Mr. Peter Adams (Peterborough, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I listened as usual with great interest to what my colleague opposite had to say. He stressed the importance of the early years of life very appropriately and the importance of young people and the stress on young people.

In the English version of the throne speech on page 12 there is a statement which says the government “will create more opportunities for young Canadians to help clean up our environment and assist in achieving Canada's global priorities, particularly in Africa”.

I wonder if the member has given any thought to this. Does he think that this is an opportunity to strengthen Katimavik nationally and to revive it also as an international organization so that young people can gain experience by doing even more useful work here in Canada and as the Speech from the Throne says, overseas and particularly in Africa?

• (1515)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Réal Ménard:** Mr. Speaker, I am sorry to remind our colleague that something extremely shameful and sad overcame this Parliament when we had the opportunity to read Canada's position three weeks ago. Concerning foreign aid, Canada ranks 19<sup>th</sup> among 22 countries. Despite the fact that this government had been managing the nation's affairs since 1993, very little has been done on this issue.

This is sad because we would have the means, as a society, to do more. This does not prevent me from valuing the new initiative for a partnership in Africa. All Bloc Québécois members understand quite

well the importance of a concerted action and on a larger scale for Africa. But concerning Canada's small contribution to foreign aid, I hope that Liberal members will have a little more spine on this.

**Mr. Svend Robinson (Burnaby—Douglas, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate my friend, the hon. member for Hochelaga—Maisonneuve, for his excellent speech.

I have a question concerning the response of the Bloc Québécois and the member to the throne speech on the government's promises to change the legislation on party financing. I was quite surprised to see that, in the list of contributions to political parties, many contributions to the Bloc Québécois were made by large businesses, including Groupaction. The Bloc Québécois received a very generous donation from Groupaction.

I would like to ask a question to my friend, the hon. member for Hochelaga—Maisonneuve. Would he agree to a change in federal laws that would eliminate the possibility for large businesses like Groupaction, which makes generous contributions to the Bloc Québécois, to make donations?

**Mr. Réal Ménard:** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Burnaby—Douglas, who has been a friend of mine for many years, knows that the main difference between the Bloc Québécois and the NDP is that we do not receive thousands of dollars in contributions from the banks the way they do.

Second, we are not paralysed at our conventions by the completely outdated control the unions exercise over the NDP.

We have long been in favour of public financing. What public financing means is that in Hochelaga—Maisonneuve or Rosemont—Petite-Patrie, our riding associations receive contributions in the five dollar range. I hope that the NDP member will take a page from our book.

**Mr. Bernard Bigras (Rosemont—Petite-Patrie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise to speak today. It is the first time I have done so since the Speech from the Throne was read. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate my colleague on his presentation, but also on the answers he gave certain government members about international assistance.

He reminded them that Canada's international assistance is on a very small scale compared with the average contribution of OECD member countries. We are very far from the 0.7% that Canada would need to give to at least keep up with the OECD average. Only 0.4% of our gross domestic product goes towards international assistance. We have a long way to go.

It is unfortunate that when Canada attends meetings such as the Earth Summit in Johannesburg, the government and the Prime Minister do not make a stronger commitment to international assistance. That was the first comment I wished to make further to the speech by the member for Hochelaga—Maisonneuve

Before getting to the issue in the throne speech of particular concern to me, which is one paragraph starting on page 6, which mentions among other things the issue of ratifying the Kyoto protocol, I would like to express my disappointment with this throne speech, particularly from a legislative point of view.



*The Address*

A careful reading of the Speech from the Throne indicates that all of the legislative measures it announces in connection with the environment are defunct bills, ones that died on the order paper in the past two years of this Parliament.

It makes no sense that we, having been elected in the year 2000, that is nearly two years ago, have spent time examining first the endangered species legislation, then the environmental assessment legislation and finally the legislation on pesticides, only to find at the end of those two years that all of these bills have died on the order paper. The only thing the government is announcing to us today is that it plans, to quote the throne speech, “to reintroduce legislation”.

It is as if this Parliament had not sat these past two years. It is as if the parliamentary committees, the Standing Committee on the Environment in particular, had not examined any bills.

Here we are again with a throne speech that announces bills that will be examined, when they have already been through the entire legislative process of the House of Commons and committees. The bottom line is that they will not take effect and thus that their provisions will not be enforced.

It is rather a disappointment that the vision set out in this throne speech, as far as environmental legislation, is concerned is nothing but an announcement of old legislative measures that will be reshaped.

As I said, the second part of my presentation will address this government's commitments and vision relating to ratification of the Kyoto protocol, as found at the bottom of page 6 and the top of page 7. This government's vision is summarized in a single paragraph.

This short paragraph contains three points in its nine or so lines. First of all, the paragraph starts with:

As part of the Kyoto protocol, Canada agreed to obligations to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 2012.

This is rather ironic for a government that decided, through the Minister of the Environment of the day, to sign the Kyoto protocol back in 1997. This was at an international meeting in Kyoto, Japan, which I attended. Yet, five years later, we learn from this government that it has no intention of respecting its commitments as far as greenhouse gas reductions are concerned, but will rather meet just certain obligations.

●(1520)

This speaks volumes about how the Kyoto protocol will be enforced in Canada. It seems quite clear to us, on this side of the House, that the government has no intention of respecting its commitments, and that the government and the Minister of the Environment have already given up on a commitment that has already been made and for which the Prime Minister was supposed to reaffirm his commitment to respect the accord.

Take the minister's statement on September 30. In an article that appeared in *La Presse*, he is reported as saying:

We need to find 240 megatons. It is possible that in the end, the reduction may not be that big. Some countries are not expected to reach their desired levels. That is why Kyoto contains penalties.

It seems clear to me that not only is there no firm and determined political will to enforce the Kyoto protocol, but the same can be said

when it comes to respecting all international environmental obligations as regards climate change.

The second part of the Speech from the Throne on this subject, a few lines further, emphasizes that, and I quote:

The government is now intensifying consultations with Canadians, industry and provinces to develop an implementation strategy to meet Canada's obligations over the next ten years.

This is indeed cause for concern regarding the development of this policy and this strategy to implement the Kyoto protocol. Allow me to explain.

Two weeks ago, during a cabinet meeting, it was learned that the Minister of the Environment was planning on tabling the implementation plan for the Kyoto protocol to cabinet a few days later. The day before that meeting, it was learned that that was no longer the case, that the minister would no longer be tabling his implementation plan, but that instead, there would be consultations.

Clearly the government has the Kyoto protocol implementation plan in hand, not on the officials' table, but at the political level. This week, the government laid out its will and its political vision on the issue, but it refuses to demonstrate transparency by sharing the elements of the implementation plan. This is cause for concern.

Last week, in Calgary, the Prime Minister indicated that, in terms of sharing the Kyoto objective, the government had made up its mind. It had decided to share the Kyoto objective not by territory, as Quebec is asking, and on the basis of models developed in Europe—where 15 sovereign states agreed within a year to arrive at a fair and just sharing of the effort required under Kyoto—but had already decided to share this objective by sector and to establish quotas by industry, which all economic activity sectors would have to meet.

For example, the Prime Minister indicated that the energy sector should take on 20% of the reductions set out in the Kyoto objective. A 20% reduction of greenhouse gas emissions for energy, for policy and for the energy sector in Alberta is feasible. But for a province such as Quebec, where 95% of the electricity is hydro power, and where the green revolution and the development of renewable energies have already started, it seems to me that, when the government asks the Quebec energy sector to contribute an effort of 20%, one does not have to be an economist to understand that this effort and the related marginal cost are totally impossible.

●(1525)

I will repeat that what we want is a fair and equitable model that respects the efforts that Quebec has made in the past. We also want the polluter pay principle to be part of that implementation plan.

The last point that I want to discuss with regard to this Speech from the Throne as it deals with the environment relates to this sentence, on page 6, which states:

Before the end of this year, the government will bring forward a resolution to Parliament on the issue of ratifying the Kyoto Protocol on Climate Change.

*The Address*

My first criticism is that the government is making the commitment to bring forward a resolution even though the Prime Minister had said in Johannesburg, at the beginning of September, that the government would vote on that before the end of the year. There is a difference between bringing forward a resolution and voting on a resolution.

We would have liked to see in the Speech from the Throne the same commitment, a reaffirmation of the intentions expressed by the Prime Minister in Johannesburg. To be consistent in politics, one cannot say one thing on the international scene and another thing here in the House of Commons.

I will say in closing that we will keep a close eye on three things: first, there must be full compliance with the Kyoto protocol; second, the implementation of the Kyoto protocol must respect Quebec's efforts; and, third, not only do we want a resolution on Kyoto, but we want a vote on the ratification of the Kyoto protocol before December 2002.

• (1530)

**Mr. Réal Ménard (Hochelaga—Maisonneuve, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I know that the hon. member for Rosemont—Petite-Patrie is disappointed in the government, and he will agree that this feeling is shared by several parliamentarians in this House.

My question to him is twofold. I know that the hon. member for Rosemont—Petite-Patrie has worked very hard on the whole issue of federal contaminated sites. I think we all agree that this is a prime example of laxness, apathy and inaction on the part of this government.

Given his vast knowledge of the issue, could the hon. member explain the situation to us?

**Mr. Bernard Bigras:** Mr. Speaker, I think this is truly an area where the government could carry out its responsibilities.

As my colleague indicated, it has been almost a year since we, on this side of the House, found out through access to information that many of the contaminated sites belonged to the federal government. Some sites come under Transport Canada, National Defence, Fisheries and Oceans, while others are directly under the of the Crown.

At the time, the government said "The Bloc Québécois is wrong". But we still had to wait until this summer, until last August in fact, to get our hands on the list of contaminated sites in Canada which are under federal jurisdiction—under the aegis of the President of the Treasury Board since she is responsible for these issues—and to realize that Quebec has more contaminated sites under federal jurisdiction than any other province.

We would have hoped to find in the throne speech not only decontamination measures but also additional funding. Civil servants are telling us that plans are in place but there is no money to implement them.

So, if we really want to commit to the cleanup and decontamination of federal sites, in order to avoid any impact on public health and the environment, we have to find additional funds to properly implement the decontamination plans for the good of the people.

**Mr. James Moore (Port Moody—Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I know that, unlike Jean Charest, my colleague knows full well that his national capital is Quebec City.

I want to ask him a question regarding Kyoto. There are only two ways to achieve the Kyoto objectives; first, by making energy more expensive to reduce consumption or, second, by entering the provincial legislative arena with regard to energy.

As a member of a party advocating provincial autonomy, how can he support such a measure and the direction that the federal government is going to take in interfering in the provincial legislative arena?

**Mr. Bernard Bigras:** Mr. Speaker, need I remind the hon. member that there is a consensus at the National Assembly on the ratification of the protocol?

The implementation of the Kyoto protocol affects areas under provincial jurisdiction, such as natural resources. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the provinces to put in place action plans to reduce climate change.

Experience has shown that when a province decides to develop an action plan with clear objectives, the results are positive. Between 1990 and 1999, Quebec reduced its greenhouse gas emissions by 3%. Why? Because it had a plan.

Two Canadian provinces have developed action plans, namely Quebec and Manitoba. I invite my colleague from western Canada to do the same, to ask his province to develop an action plan with clear objectives, and perhaps he will see results.

• (1535)

**Hon. Martin Cauchon (Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, it is an honour for me to rise today to comment on this week's Speech from the Throne.

As a Canadian, and the member for Outremont, I am proud of this government's program. Its commitment to competitive cities and healthy communities, innovation and regional development, youth and immigrants, will provide Quebecers with the necessary tools for sustainable economic and social prosperity, as it will all Canadian provinces, territories and communities.

My role as Minister of Justice and Attorney General consists in working in conjunction with all Canadians and all members of Parliament, in collaboration with the provinces and territories, to bring Canada's justice system into the new millennium and to ensure that it meets the present and future needs of the Canadian population as a whole. Canada's justice system plays a crucial role within the society we wish to build, the society within which we wish to live.

*The Address*

A fair, accessible and effective justice system is an essential part of any free and democratic society. It guarantees a peaceful means of resolving differences. It allows us to protect those who are most vulnerable and is the foundation of the public's trust in its economic, social and political institutions. And, ultimately, it reflects and defends the values common to all Canadians, and makes Canada a country envied by all.

Children and the family are one of this government's main priorities. The health of a justice system—and the health of a society as well—can be measured by the way that we protect those less able to protect themselves. Children are our country's most precious resource. The hopes of our nation, its dreams for a prosperous future and a strong, sensitive, responsible and just society reside in our children.

I want to help families and these children in times of crisis. I think that we should amend the Divorce Act in order to serve the best interests of the child.

Last April, I presented a report to Parliament on the repercussions of the child support reforms implemented by this government in 1997. The news in this regard is in fact very encouraging. Research shows that a more objective calculation of child support orders reduces the tension between parents.

[*English*]

We must build on this success. This is why I will be introducing legislative changes to the Divorce Act and other federal family laws.

At this time I would like to thank the Special Joint Committee on Child Custody and Access. Its important work has directly led to many of the recommendations I will be taking forward.

In addition, I have heard from Canadians that services are just as or more important than legislative change and I am looking at how I can work with my provincial and territorial partners on this. One improvement could be expanding unified family courts. These courts provide a single forum for exercising comprehensive family law jurisdiction for both federal and provincial law.

The language we use in our laws and in the administration of justice sends an important signal about our values. This is why I am committed to bringing forward a proposal to reform family law legislation to eliminate the use of the terms “custody” and “access”, and to present a new approach based on parenting orders.

● (1540)

These changes must be accompanied by education and information about the nature of the reforms in order to promote a child-focused perspective on the part of parents, lawyers, judges, and indeed all Canadians. This is not the only area where we must act to protect children's interests. It is indeed intolerable that there are those in our society who would prey on our children. While rapid development in information and communications technology has presented great economic opportunities, it has also made it easier for some to exploit our children.

[*Translation*]

I would like to continue this progress by examining all the possibilities for amending the Criminal Code with respect to the

specific issue of artistic merit as a defence in child pornography offences.

We have other specific measures in mind for protecting our children; I will mention just two. First, clarifying offences specifically involving children, such as in the area of child neglect and exploitation of children for sexual purposes. Second, making it easier for child victims to testify.

[*English*]

Another message that was clear in the Speech from the Throne was that the government is committed to creating an inclusive society. Justice is, and always should be, available to all, otherwise there is simply no justice.

A well-functioning legal aid system is indeed an indispensable element of providing accessible and inclusive justice. Last year and this year the Government of Canada provided an additional \$20 million per year over and above our existing \$82 million in contributions to the provinces and territories for criminal legal aid.

Increased funding alone is not a long-term solution to the pressures being faced by the legal aid system. Together with our provincial and territorial partners, we are nearing completion of a review of legal aid which includes a federally funded legal aid research initiative to look at unmet needs in criminal legal aid and representation in civil legal aid.

As part of this research initiative, pilot projects are being conducted to allow jurisdictions to test innovative and alternative service delivery methods. The results of both the research and pilot projects would be used by the provinces, territories and federal government as we move to jointly develop solutions to address the challenges currently facing the delivery of legal aid.

[*Translation*]

We must also guarantee that Canadians have access to the justice system in the language of their choice. This government has always advocated the enhancement and development of English and French language minorities and supports the full recognition of the use of French and English in Canadian society. And this is nowhere more important than in the justice system. This will indeed always be a priority to me.

Canada's justice system faces major challenges, when it comes to the fair treatment of natives.

In the last five years, the strategy on justice for natives has resulted in a greater optimism among first nations, the Inuit and northern communities. The strategy is aimed at implementing programs that respond well to local needs, through local traditions. Many of these programs have been very successful. They have improved access. They have reduced the recidivism rate. They have reinforced all of the communities.

*The Address*

The main thing is that these approaches are better tailored to the needs of natives and northern communities. I am committed to reinforcing these community approaches that focus on young people living on reserves and northern aboriginals.

I will continue to work with the provinces and territories, as well as with natives and northern communities, to take advantage of our collective successes in these important areas.

•(1545)

[English]

I will support the government's commitment to implement a national drug strategy to address addiction. Part of this is in rethinking our approach to dealing with the problem of drug use.

As Minister of Justice I will do my part by re-examining how the justice system treats drug cases. The Department of Justice is currently participating in two pilot drug treatment courts, one in Toronto and the other in Vancouver. This approach is based on the recognition that substance abuse is a chronic disorder that can be successfully treated.

Preliminary results are indeed very encouraging. I will therefore look to expand the use of these courts to other communities. Another area that I will be examining is that of decriminalizing cannabis possession. Currently these cases are dealt with through criminal prosecutions, the most coercive and expensive instrument we have. We need to examine whether this is the most effective means of achieving a positive result for our society.

I want to ensure that Canadians do not misunderstand me. Canada has no plans, as I said many times, to legalize marijuana use. I believe this could inflict serious harm on society and lead to bigger problems.

Any drug policy must be developed within a broad context of national policing, health and social policies, federal mandates and a collective will of the people of Canada. We must consider Canada's obligation under international convention. This is the responsible approach and it is the approach we will follow.

The special Senate committee on illegal drugs recently released its report and the special committee on the non-medical use of drugs will also be studying this question. Their reports will help inform members when debating this issue.

In addition to making Canada's communities safe and secure, we need to keep in mind that Canada is a member of the world community. As such we have a responsibility to help other nations meet their needs and aspirations. In particular, Canada has assumed a leadership role in supporting the new partnership for Africa's development. I am indeed committed to supporting the important work that Canada will be doing in this area. We will seek opportunities to lend interested African countries Canada's technical expertise and knowledge in the area of justice to help them build a justice infrastructure they need to become prosperous.

[Translation]

In conclusion, I am proud of the achievements of this government and I am proud of the agenda we set in the Speech from the Throne. I

am convinced that these projects will improve the lives of all Canadians.

As the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, I will do everything that I can to ensure that Canada's justice system helps to build a better future for all of us.

•(1550)

[English]

**Mr. Kevin Sorenson (Crowfoot, Canadian Alliance):** Madam Speaker, I want to thank the justice minister for coming down and giving a response to the throne speech. I feel the justice minister should have taken the opportunity to speak to the Prime Minister before the throne speech was given because when we go through the throne speech it would appear there is little dealing with judicial change that we need to see in the country.

This throne speech hurts many parts of the country. It hurts western Canada. There is nothing in the throne speech dealing with agriculture. There is no hope for the oil and gas industry with the expectations that the government wants to push ahead with Kyoto.

However I do want to question the minister on two points. First, by mentioning in the throne speech the potential of decriminalizing marijuana, is it not his belief that he is pre-empting and taking away from the work of the non-medical drug committee that is expected to have a report out at the end of November?

The non-medical drug committee at this point is questioning which direction we should go, not only with marijuana but with addictions, safe injection, harm reduction and all those things. For a throne speech to come out and say that the plan is to decriminalize marijuana completely pre-empts the work of the non-medical drug committee.

My second question is in regard to another area that was not specific in the throne speech and deals with the plan to forge ahead in the fall, in November according to some of the media, to make significant changes to the Criminal Code that would bring forward a race-based Criminal Code, a two tier approach to criminal law based upon colour of skin and race.

Could the Minister of Justice please answer these two questions?

**Hon. Martin Cauchon:** Madam Speaker, first of all, the hon. member says to the House and the Canadian population that in reading the Speech from the Throne he sees almost nothing from the justice department. I would invite him to read the Speech from the Throne again.

We talked about the protection of our children. It is a top priority for our government as well for Canadians. We will be coming forward this fall with measures to protect our children. We talked about family law in the Speech from the Throne. We have been discussing this and thanks to the work of members in the House regarding family law we want to move ahead with this.

We have been talking about legal aid. Maybe legal aid means nothing to the other side, but legal aid is key to the justice system as well as to our society.

*The Address*

The member talked about another question which is important as well, the question of decriminalizing marijuana. The hon. member said that I showed disrespect to a committee of the House. I guess that he would like the answer to be yes indeed, but the answer is exactly the opposite. In my main speech I said that before taking any position as a government we will wait for the report of that special committee.

I said as well that the Senate tabled a report some weeks ago with recommendations that affect the Department of Justice directly. We are looking into that report, but as I said many times before taking any official position on behalf of the government we will wait for the important work of our colleagues in the House. In light of those recommendations we will take the necessary steps.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Réal Ménard (Hochelaga—Maisonnette, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I have two short questions for the minister.

Will he undertake to table the reform of the Canadian Human Rights Act so as to include social condition as a prohibited ground of discrimination and thus go down in history, if he wants to? This is a long-awaited reform.

Second, will the minister explain why he disappointed so many people this summer when he decided to appeal the decisions of the Ontario Divisional Court and the Quebec Superior Court concerning section 15?

It is amazing that the Minister of Justice did not support the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Will he undertake to table the relevant documentation in the House?

Section 15 provides for equal rights. Why is the minister appealing these decisions?

• (1555)

**Hon. Martin Cauchon:** Madam Speaker, these are two very important issues for our government. They are also important for Canadians. These issues involve legislative as well as social considerations.

First, let us talk about the La Forest report. We received this report, which is a big document. We are currently reviewing it and, as soon as we are in a position to do so, we will provide a response, and I will explain the government's position and reaction, from both a political and legislative point of view.

The second question deals with marriage for same sex spouses, and more specifically with section 15 of the charter. The hon. member raised some important considerations. As a society, we adopted the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Section 15, which deals with equality rights, can be interpreted in many ways. This summer, we had a ruling from Ontario to the effect that the existing definition of marriage under common law violated the principles set out in section 15.

This being said, that same ruling overturned a decision made by the same court, in 1993 or 1994 if memory serves me right, confirming the legality of the definition.

I should also point out that a totally opposite ruling was made in British Columbia. That ruling maintains the legality of the current definition.

Following these rulings, the government decided to go ahead with a consultation process that will be conducted by the appropriate and competent parliamentary committee. During the summer, I also announced, on behalf of our government, that we were preparing a discussion paper to help the committee in its work.

Essentially, the government is saying that Parliament will assume its responsibilities. We will ask the public to participate in the committee's work, to examine possible solutions and the positions that we must take as a society.

I also said, since we were engaged in a consultation process, that I wanted to make sure that all options were kept open, which is the reason for the appeals. There are also legal considerations that come into play.

[*English*]

**Mr. Peter Stoffer (Sackville—Musquodoboit Valley—Eastern Shore, NDP):** Madam Speaker, one aspect of the throne speech which was severely lacking was resources for those people who uphold the laws of Canada.

Right now we are short about 1,600 RCMP officers across the country. There is a very good chance that within three to five years we could be short 3,000 to 5,000 members through attrition and retirement. What is the cabinet or the government doing to address that serious issue?

**Hon. Martin Cauchon:** Madam Speaker, I wonder where the hon. member was when the government tabled its last budget.

There were the events of September 11. The member knows as well what major steps have been taken by the government in terms of legislation, but we have done more than that. Look at the additional funding the government has provided the RCMP. We are talking about a considerable amount of money. As well, look at the additional funding that we have provided the customs organization.

We talk about protecting our society and having the resources needed in order to achieve that goal. We have to make sure that as well as protecting our society we are able to respect the values we have developed as Canadians. We have to totally assume our mandate and protect our society. We have enough resources.

Once again I invite the hon. member to look at the last budget tabled by the government.

• (1600)

**Mr. Philip Mayfield (Cariboo—Chilcotin, Canadian Alliance):** Madam Speaker, I would like to congratulate the minister for participating in the debate today. It is always a pleasure.

My question for the minister relates to his concern for children. I have heard no response to the report of the Special Joint Committee on Child Custody and Access. When might the House expect to hear a response from the government on that report? It was extremely anguishing to listen to parents and the legal profession talk about this issue.

*The Address*

I would very much like to hear the government's response. Would the minister tell us when it is coming?

**Hon. Martin Cauchon:** Madam Speaker, first I thank very much the members of the committee. They did fantastic work which will be very useful in order to take the necessary steps to reform, if I may use that word, the Divorce Act.

When we look at the Divorce Act we always take positions based on the best interests of children. It is key to our nation. At the same time we have been looking at custody and access. We have been talking a lot about those issues. We have heard from people across Canada. Shortly we will come forward with some amendments with regard to the Divorce Act.

At the same time we are looking at the notion of services, to get involved and help families that are facing crises. The notion of services support is as important as any reform we as the government may bring forward on the Divorce Act.

**Mr. James Moore (Port Moody—Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam, Canadian Alliance):** Madam Speaker, I will be splitting my time with my colleague from Nanaimo—Cowichan.

I am pleased to rise in the debate on the Speech from the Throne. I am particularly pleased that my colleague from Richmond is in the House given that he was elected on a platform to represent Canadian Alliance policies. I would like to hear his views on how he is advancing transportation reform on the government side, particularly given that one of the largest airports in Canada happens to be in his riding, yet we see no action from the Liberals on it.

Transportation is not just about moving people and products; it is about building a nation. Most Canadians know that by land area Canada is the second largest country on Earth, but I want to put that size into a different perspective.

Our 3.8 million square miles is roughly 52% bigger than the Roman empire was at its peak in 120 AD. The Romans knew what we should not forget, which is that to maintain effective control over such a vast territory, an efficient transportation system is necessary to facilitate the movement of people and goods and to build unity. Fundamentally the Romans understood that allowing people to visit each other and trade with each other would bind the empire together with a greater force than any army could ever muster. The system they built still inspires us 19 centuries later.

The need to bind a vast land together dominated the minds of the fathers of our Confederation. If we read the various terms of union we will see requirements to provide ferry service to link the four founding provinces by rail or in the case of British Columbia "to connect the seaboard of British Columbia with the railway system of Canada within 10 years from the date of the union". This is in article 11 of B.C.'s terms of union of 1871.

More recent federal governments have also understood the need to bind the country together. In 1937 Parliament created Air Canada as a national instrument for providing air service. It was done so largely so Canadians could fly across Canada without having to fly through the United States. It was about building Canada and uniting Canada together. The federal government alone set up the airline to build major airports across Canada.

In 1956 the United States passed the interstate highway act and began building the world class highway network that we know today. Canada, desperate not to be left behind, decided to build a national highway network as well. Under the slogan "Finish the drive by '65", the federal government offered to pay 50% of the cost of building the 7,300 kilometre long Trans-Canada highway. It is important to note that the federal government of the day paid 50% of the cost of building the Trans-Canada highway a full decade before the first dime of gas taxes was ever levied against Canadian travellers.

We need to think about why former federal governments built a national railway, a national air system and a national highway system. These were not exclusively exercises to spur temporary job creation projects in pockets of the country. These were necessary steps in linking our cities and towns and joining our provinces and uniting a vast sprawling country.

Previous governments understood the crucial role of nation building, but this government does not. Rather than enhance what we have or even maintain what was built by previous governments, the current Liberal regime sees our national infrastructure as a source of tax revenue. It taxes gasoline while ignoring its role in helping provinces maintain our national highway.

In the case of British Columbia for example, the federal government has collected roughly \$4.7 billion in fuel taxes from motorists in the last decade. However it has returned a mere \$30 million to Victoria to be spent on the province's roads, including the Trans-Canada highway which is in desperate need of upgrading particularly between Salmon Arm and the Alberta border where a number of Canadians have died because of the poor shape of the road.

The federal government taxes air passengers \$24 whether they board in Toronto where passengers are screened for security, or whether they board at Vancouver's south terminal where there is no passenger screening whatsoever.

The government was warned by airlines and consumer groups that air passenger taxes, which are now up to 41% of the base price of an airfare ticket, would discourage airline passengers and result in service cuts from air carriers. We have heard that passenger numbers are down in Regina by up to 52% and in Saskatoon they are down by 42%.

We also know that Air Canada Jazz is going to cease service to St. Leonard, New Brunswick; Yarmouth, Nova Scotia; and Stephenville, Newfoundland; and reduce service to Goose Bay, Deer Lake, Wabush and St. John's. WestJet's service between Edmonton and Calgary is down 20%.

*The Address*

The government knows that fewer passengers are flying. It knows this for two reasons: one, because day in and day out in the House the Canadian Alliance has been telling it; and two, because its air tax is bringing in \$11 million a month less in revenue than it forecasted. What the Liberals failed to understand when they put the air tax in place is that when they tax something, they get less of it. They have taxed to the point where fewer Canadians are flying, small air carriers are struggling and cutting capacity and as a result, the expected revenues are not rolling in.

• (1605)

This is a failure to understand the basics of economics by the Liberal government. In economics there are two ways of forecasting a policy change vis-à-vis economics and tax policy. The first is called a static analysis which assumes that a tax increase will not result in a change in the behaviour of consumers with regard to the product being taxed. The second is a dynamic analysis which takes into account the change in people's behaviour when we raise the cost to consumers to engage in that behaviour.

In 1970 MIT Professor Paul Samuelson won the Nobel Prize in economic sciences for his development of the static and dynamic economic theory. It is unfortunate that the former finance minister in his final budget failed to learn this lesson before he implemented the \$24 tax on Canadians.

At the same time that the government taxes passengers it tells small airports there will have to be a new five minute emergency response time and then fails to provide any financial assistance for them to get there. The very idea that the federal government might have a role to ensure that national air infrastructure is maintained is outrageous to the government. Airports and the airline industry to the government are seen as nothing more than something to tax and suck off of.

This mindless way of managing airports and airlines has resulted in the bizarre situation where one airport, Vancouver International Airport, pays 57.6% of all the property taxes and airport taxes received by the federal Liberal government. Even to the most casual observer this hardly seems fair.

The member for Richmond is still in the House. The Vancouver International Airport is in his constituency. He crossed from this side of the House to the government side and sits on the Liberal side. Not once in the House have I ever heard the member for Richmond defending the Vancouver International Airport and the way in which it is being hammered by the federal government for the property taxes that it pays.

I listened carefully to the throne speech and did not hear a word about the airline industry or airports, or any commitment to review the industry stifling \$24 air tax. I did however hear a vague commitment to fund infrastructure and I hope that it will include highways.

Just as it is important for the government to continue nation building policies of earlier regimes, it is crucial that the government recognize the nature of our country and the need to work with, rather than against, provinces in funding highways both within the provinces and within cities. I encourage the government to form a fifty-fifty infrastructure partnership with the provinces so that major

projects enjoying the support of both levels of government may proceed.

If this should be unacceptable or undoable, or if the government cannot show the leadership, I propose that the government eliminate all taxes on gasoline and hand over the tax room to the provinces that rightly maintain, engineer and build roads in their provinces.

The provinces are spending the money they receive from fuel taxes on road and urban transport. Canadians from coast to coast are calling on the government to follow suit; to either partner with the provinces or give them more room to tax gasoline. They will spend it on the roads that are in the best interest of those provinces and those cities. Provinces and cities know it is in their best interest in a drastically better way than any group of bureaucrats sitting in air-conditioned offices in downtown Ottawa.

Like a drunk waking up after the night before, the throne speech was long on rhetoric and short on specifics. There is still time to ensure that the infrastructure program respects provincial jurisdiction. However if the government wants to continue to build this nation, as those who came before us did, it must address the crucial problems that I have outlined.

In 1867 Canadians travelled across Canada by rail and the government of the day built the railway. One hundred years later Canadians travelled across Canada by car and the government of the day helped build the highways. Now as we take our first steps in the new millennium Canadians are travelling across our vast nation by air and the government is taxing them and imposing new demands on airports in a way that not only fails to bind Canadians together but divides us by costs.

Nearly two millennia ago the Roman Caesars understood the need to make it easier for citizens to travel across that empire. I hope that if our government is serious about national unity, it will take a few pages from history and build an infrastructure network that will truly unite us into the future.

I look forward to hearing from the member for Richmond on how he is defending his constituency and this important airport and how the government is ripping off his constituents.

• (1610)

**Mr. Peter Stoffer (Sackville—Musquodoboit Valley—Eastern Shore, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I agree with my hon. colleague on two things. When members cross the floor they should quit, run in a byelection and then allow the constituents of their riding to decide whether or not they should fly under another political banner.

The member is correct about that reprehensible \$24 airport surtax. He is a very astute student about Atlantic Canada, and I know his party is working hard there. The Government of Canada takes \$60 million a year out of the Atlantic Canada economy in the security tax and only puts \$10 million back in. My big problem besides that it is a lot of money is that it is going into port security, not airport security. Air travellers of the country are paying for security in other areas.

*The Address*

Does the hon. member agree with that sentiment? I would also like him to elaborate a bit more on that.

**Mr. James Moore:** Madam Speaker, I appreciate the comment from my colleague and I agree with what he said.

I should also mention that there are some issues where it is actually very telling. We have a political party that is on the centre right, the Canadian Alliance, and a political party that is on the intellectual left, which is the NDP. We hear rumblings from backbenchers on the Liberal side in the hallways, and the hon. member and I are completely united on this issue, as well as his colleague from Churchill, Manitoba, who has been fighting with me on the subject. We have political parties that are on ideological opposite sides of the fence and yet united in such a unified voice against a public policy. It shows crystal clear that public policy is not serving Canadians well, no matter what region we are from.

The impact this is having on Atlantic Canada is crystal clear, as the member mentioned, in terms of the airports themselves being closed down and cutting back capacity. Every single red cent that is raised from the \$24 air security tax does not go to air security. It goes into general revenue. The government then decides how much to cut out of general revenue and give to airport security. It is a complete rip-off.

The Canadian Air Transport Security Authority, CATSA, the organization which was just created by the government to manage airport and airline security, still does not have a permanent chairman of its board of directors and it is over a year since September 11. The government has been collecting the air tax since April 1 of this year from my constituents and the constituents of the member for Sackville—Musquodoboit Valley—Eastern Shore. It is a complete rip-off.

I raised this issue at a committee meeting. The legislation that put in place the \$24 air security tax had a list of airports that were to be taxed on this. I suggested that certain small airports that would be impacted most by this air tax be taken off that list. One of the airports on that list was the airport in Miramichi, New Brunswick. Miramichi does not have daily jet service. In fact the airport at Miramichi is dead.

I asked the members on the Liberal side if they would consider taking this airport off the list, considering the fact that the airport was in dead. The Liberals said that if it was dead, then, yes, they could take it off the list because it would not impact the bottom line. And they took it off the list. However, they amended my motion to take Miramichi airport off the list and said that if that airport came back to life and if it did have daily jet service again, then they reserve the right to put the \$24 air tax back in place. Only if an airport dies, loses its jet service and is of no service to the community whatsoever will the government get off its back and give it a tax cut.

That is the kind of mindless air tax policy that we get from the Liberal government. That is the very policy that the former finance minister, now campaigning for the leadership of that party and the leadership of this country, put in his final budget. He did no impact assessment whatsoever of the air tax on the economy. He did no consultation whatsoever with the House of Commons finance committee. He did no consultation whatsoever with small communities such as where the member for Sackville—Musquodoboit

Valley—Eastern Shore comes from and the airports that his community is dependent on. He did no studies whatsoever on this air tax.

Now he is campaigning for the leadership of this country, talking about democratic deficits, when he ignored committees and ignored members of the House, and talking about representing regions and being a fiscal conservative. He did not walk the walk when he was in the House. He talked it, he did not walk it. Now he says he wants to be Prime Minister to do more of it.

What he did in the past was a shame. He hurt small communities, he hurt air service and he did not unite Canada in the way that we need to through transportation infrastructure.

• (1615)

**Mr. David Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands, Canadian Alliance):** Madam Speaker, I come from Saskatchewan and proud to be from there.

Over the last 10 years we have tried to get funding out of the federal government to pave the Trans-Canada Highway in Saskatchewan. We received absolutely no help. The government now apparently is beginning to put funding into highways in other areas. I would like the member to comment on the lack of vision he has seen from the government in terms of highway funding and on the inability of the government to treat Canadians equitably.

He mentioned the former finance minister who is the person who denied us access to highway funding. I would like the member's comments on that as well.

**Mr. James Moore:** Madam Speaker, my colleague is quite right. Provinces are getting ripped off, and in a dramatic way, because there is not an equitable means of distributing the gas tax dollars. There is no question about that. Saskatchewan has been hit hard.

During the summer the government was floating the idea of twinning the Trans-Canada Highway. It was not in the throne speech. Our position on that, if it ever comes up, is that if the government does decide to go down the road of twinning the Trans-Canada Highway we support it where it is needed and where it makes sense. However, we are not in favour of twinning the Trans-Canada Highway as a legacy project and as a state of symbolism.

Again, 99% of the roads and highways in Canada are engineered, built and maintained by the provinces. They are the ones who are responsible for it. Half the taxes that people pay at the pump are taxes to the federal government. The federal government is not giving it back to the provinces to maintain those roads. Then we hear the Liberals saying that they are going to twin the Trans-Canada Highway under their rules, under their engineering, and we are going to get it if we name it the Jean Chrétien memorial highway.

**Mr. Reed Elley (Nanaimo—Cowichan, Canadian Alliance):** Madam Speaker, it is indeed a pleasure for me to rise on behalf of my constituents of Nanaimo—Cowichan on Vancouver Island to thank them for electing me to the House of Commons so that I might speak on their behalf in reply to the Speech from the Throne.



*The Address*

Typically the Speech from the Throne sets out the new vision that the government has for the country, but this week's Speech from the Throne offers no vision, no plan, no details and no price tags. Indeed, most of what was in the Speech from the Throne was recycled from past Liberal agendas.

The legacy for the Prime Minister will be that he had nine years of majority government and in the last months of his reign he has still failed to complete election promises from 1993. That is nine years and yet he could not successfully fulfil his original mandate.

I am the official opposition senior critic for labour. I listened intently for the government's direction in this particular area. The Speech from the Throne had 81 words concerning labour that really said absolutely nothing. This is what the Speech from the Throne had to say about labour:

The economy of the 21st century will need workers who are lifelong learners, who can respond and adapt to change. Canada's labour market programs must be transformed to meet this challenge. To this end, the government will work with Canadians, provinces, sector councils, labour organizations and learning institutions to create the skills and learning architecture that Canada needs, and to promote workplace learning. This will include building our knowledge and reporting to Canadians about what is working and what is not.

That is about the worst doublespeak I have ever heard in my life. Of course workers must improve and maintain their skills. That is not something new. The government has already attempted to address this particular issue with programs such as the one called "Knowledge Matters: Skills and Learning for Canadians" which they foisted upon an unsuspecting public in the last few years. With this in mind, why did the Prime Minister see fit to make grandiose statements about programs that already exist?

Here is another statement, "reporting to Canadians about what is working and what is not." That is another scratch our head statement. Perhaps this comes about because the government has had so many failed programs that it wanted to acknowledge future failures in advance. I do not know.

What is completely missing from the Speech from the Throne with regard to labour is probably one of the most serious problems that will face this country in the next few years and that is the enormous shortfall of labourers in the workforce itself. With the current shortfall of skilled workers and the pending mass retirement of baby boomers from our existing workforce, Canada will soon be in serious trouble. We need professional skilled tradespeople, technicians/technologists and management people in almost every area of our economic and public life. Canada's birth rate is decreasing and it is now lower than our retirement rate.

According to the Canadian Federation of Independent Business there are approximately 265,000 jobs that are currently vacant in the small and medium sized business sector. Of these, 185,000 jobs have been open for four months or more. As the economy improves, labour shortage is expected to increase. That is a challenge for government and business. However there was nothing in the throne speech to tell us what the vision of the government is on this particular problem.

The government likes to talk about expanding the economy, but almost 40% of Canadian companies recently surveyed by the Alliance of Manufacturers and Exporters Canada said their difficulty

in finding skilled workers has become a serious constraint on their own expansion. Without the ability for the backbone of our economy, the small business sector, to expand our economy, it will not continue to grow.

• (1620)

Much of the baby boom generation has already reached the early retirement age of 55. The Canadian Council on Social Development predicts that a swift mass retirement could set in as soon as the year 2006. The effects on pensions and health care will be severe. What are some of the solutions that the government should be talking about? What is the vision that it has for Canadians on this particular issue?

One of the most significant factors concerns the place of immigrants in our labour market. According to the Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics, as a whole, immigrants fair relatively better in the labour market. Immigrants have a lower proportion of unemployment and a higher proportion are employed full time and covered by job pension plans. On average, immigrant employees work more hours at higher wages resulting in higher annual earnings.

However, and this is important, according to Michelle Goldberg, research analyst with the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, only 25% of Canadian immigrants work in their chosen professions. This is most often related to the language barrier along with the fact that only one-third of Canadian immigrants received prior information on professional licensing and the Canadian job market before they actually came to this country. Of these two issues, the language barrier is more easily overcome but we have serious problems with our immigration system as it relates to workers and their chosen professions and the huge labour force problem that we will have very soon. It is estimated that by the year 2016, the annual rate of immigration will be required to average 585,000 immigrants a year in order to meet our labour needs.

What does that say to immigration policy? What is the vision of the government as it integrates immigration and the labour shortage? There is nothing in the throne speech that even attempts to address this problem. This is the problem of the government as a whole. It does not give vision. It is not proactive. It is reactive.

Let us look at the aboriginal problem in terms of unemployment. Unemployment rates among aboriginals are shockingly high, sometimes 80% to 90% on reserves across the country. Here we have a huge, largely untapped labour resource right before our very eyes. How will the government motivate, educate and encourage young aboriginals and encourage them to become a part of the mainstream labour force? This is another area of government life that has to be integrated into the final solution of the labour shortage that is facing this country but did we hear anything in the throne speech about this? Not a bit.

I could go on and on about labour issues but there are a few other things that I thought should have been introduced through the Speech from the Throne and were not talked about hardly at all.

*The Address*

In my own riding of Nanaimo—Cowichan, softwood lumber is a huge concern. I have stated previously in the House that thousands of jobs are dependent upon the softwood industry. The Minister for International Trade and his secretary of state just do not seem to get it. Individuals and their families, businesses and in fact entire communities are being wiped out by the lack of a softwood lumber deal with the United States. The official opposition has talked about this problem since I arrived in the House in 1997.

If the government had been effectively dealing with this problem when we brought it to its attention, I truly believe that we would not be in the fix that we are in today. Now we sit without an agreement, mills are closing and real people are unemployed and hurting financially and the Minister for International Trade is still not close to an agreement on this file. That is shameful.

It also find it ironic that the government is attempting to implement a code of ethics. After what happened in the House in question period today, I just shake my head.

**An hon. member:** It's a joke.

**Mr. Reed Elley:** Yes, it is a joke.

The Canadian Alliance has been championing democratic reform for 15 years, not just when facing a backbench revolt or a leadership race. Let me remind the government that Canadians are still awaiting the fulfillment of the Liberals' 1993 promise of an independent ethics commissioner who reports directly to Parliament.

When the government can actually follow through and complete its first promise on electoral reform, people out there will start taking it seriously. Until then, it is empty rhetoric. People are getting sick and tired of the government and they have been voting with their feet; away from the ballot box. In the year 2000, 40% of the people in this country did not even bother vote because they were sick and tired of politicians who do not keep their promises.

• (1625)

As a Canadian Alliance government in waiting we will continue to push for true democratic reform initiatives in the House. It should have been talked about in the throne speech far more than it was and the action has to come, not just talk but action.

I believe that most Canadians view the Speech from the Throne as a colossal waste of time. We need to have a government that does not just talk but truly walks the talk.

**Mr. Peter Stoffer (Sackville—Musquodoboit Valley—Eastern Shore, NDP):** Madam Speaker, the hon. member talked about the lack of details in the throne speech. According to the Solicitor General we have to wait for the details until he gets the details. It is quite obvious that when the Liberal government gives us more details then we will have the details. If he can figure out what I just said, he is a better man than I am.

When the hon. member talked about labour he forgot one very important element, the fishermen in his riding and what the federal government has done to the commercial fisheries on the west coast. I would like to give him the opportunity to stand up for a couple of minutes and explain to the House how the Liberal government has, through its Department of Fisheries and Oceans, brought devastation

to the fishermen and their families in coastal communities on the west coast.

**Mr. Reed Elley:** Madam Speaker, as I said, I could go on and on about the problems in the labour field. Certainly the devastation of the fisheries on the west coast is something that has been a repeat of what occurred on the east coast. One would think that the government would get it right. Instead, it continues to make the same mistakes right across the country.

In my riding of Nanaimo—Cowichan, boats are in dry dock. There has been a buy back program. People who used to be in the fishing industry are no longer there because the government simply said that there were too many people fishing and that it had to do something about the stocks so it bought back their boats and their licences.

Along with that, some promises were made that we would get stocks back if we made a concerted effort to conserve the stocks, and no one was against that, but we wanted to make sure that the stocks came back.

For my hon. colleague's illumination, this year we had a huge return on the sockeye salmon run. One would think the government would then say to the fishermen that because it had been somewhat successful in bringing back the stocks that the fishermen could actually go out there and fish.

Fishermen have phoned me to ask if I, as their MP, could do something so that they could at least get back out there and have a few more days to actually fish. There was no way. The government let one opening come up and it allowed the fishermen to get back out there but most of the fishermen on the west coast were only allowed to catch between 20% and 25% of their quota even though there were fish going by them all the time.

What has happened is that now DFO is up on the Adams River zapping fish because there were so many that got by because they did not count properly. Is that conservation? Is that allowing people to have jobs and a livelihood? That is the result of Liberal government intervention in an industry that I think it views as a sunset industry. What a shame.

• (1630)

**Mr. Richard Harris (Prince George—Bulkley Valley, Canadian Alliance):** Madam Speaker, my colleague from Nanaimo—Cowichan has certainly outlined the chronology of corruption that has been created by the Liberal government since 1993.

He spoke about the new proposed ethics package. I have to ask him this. Can he believe the audacity of the Prime Minister, who has been caught in scandal after scandal, even scandals created by his own hand on the back of a napkin, and the corruption that as gone on in the government, to come here in whatever state of mind and ask the backbenchers of his own party and opposition MPs, who have virtually no decision-making power in this Parliament, to now submit their assets and liabilities and their spouses' as well? This is hypocrisy. Does my hon. colleague not agree with that?

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos):** I will allow the hon. member to answer even though there is no time left.

**Mr. Reed Elley:** Madam Speaker, you are very benevolent.

*The Address*

Of course I feel exactly the same way as my hon. colleague from Prince George—Bulkley Valley. It seems like the government's attempt to do something about the ethics problem within its own party and within its own government is simply setting up some kind of a two tiered preferential system whereby those who might have the most ability to be caught in this thing will get off scot-free and those people who perhaps do not have the opportunity to be involved in any kind of corruption will be the ones who will be under greater scrutiny. Somehow that just does not make sense. It is two tiered ethics.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos):** I do not think I am driven by benevolence but just by generosity of spirit to all members.

**Mr. John O'Reilly (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I want to compliment you on your hard work and the way you have balanced the debate in the House, allowing everyone to get their questions in. I look forward to your continued good counsel.

Earlier I said that I would not be splitting my time, but I am now because the member for Burin—St. George's has indicated that he would like to take part in this debate. I certainly welcome his wise counsel from that wonderful province known as the rock and will look forward to that.

I have listened to the speeches of the opposition and I hope the government is taking notice of them. There have been some suggestions at which we as a government certainly have to look and I hope the government will look at them. However I remind the opposition that the Speech from the Throne is a blueprint. It is not something cast in stone. It is not something that is legislative. It is something from which legislation will flow. Ministers will introduce legislation in conjunction with the blueprint that is laid out by the Speech from the Throne.

This is an opportunity for Parliament to restart, to rethink, to regenerate, to bring forward ideas and hopefully to go forward on a plan that includes the Canada we want. It is fair to say that we all want a better Canada. That is why we are here and that is why we take part in debate in the House.

That is why when I read the Speech from the Throne and I listened to the Prime Minister's speech, I was looking for certain signals that affect my riding of Haliburton—Victoria—Brock. I think of health care as being right at the top. The words were "to put in place the health care system we need and want". I am not waiting for the Romanow commission. I do not think that will be any magic bullet. I think we all know what the problem is. The provinces claim that the federal government puts in 14¢ and the federal government claims it puts in 40¢ on every dollar. I want to know from where exactly those numbers come and from where they flow. I would like to know that our health care system will be continued.

My riding is the second largest riding in southern Ontario. The member for Wild Rose came to the Lindsay fair this year. He added some joviality to the situation. I think he had a good time and hope he comes back. It is a great place to be.

Local citizens went out and raised \$6 million to build the new hospital. In fact the Lindsay fair board gave up five acres of land and will now move so that the hospital can be there.

In the survey I did in my riding, health care is the number one issue. Maybe it is because of people like Drew Gunsolus who was the chair of the committee and also the citizen of the year for going out and raising \$6 million. Obviously our number one item is to ensure that we have a regional hospital in an area which is desperately in need of it. I have used the hospital many times. I was born there, as were the rest of the people in my family, including my wife. We have a great affinity to health care. If that is in fact the government's number one priority, then we owe it to ourselves to act on the recommendations that will flow from the Romanow commission. Health care to me was, is and will be something that is our number one item.

We then talked about getting Canada's children off welfare. This is an area that reaches very deeply into the heart of our society. We are dealing with poverty and homelessness.

● (1635)

In my riding there is an organization that is trying to get funding right now. It is called "A Place Called Home". It provides facilities for people who, for one reason or another, have no place to go or no place to live, whether it be from poverty, abuse, down on their luck or whatever. I do not think anyone wants to be on welfare. I do not think anyone would like to think that their children can survive on welfare.

Welfare is a trap. If a person gets on to welfare, it is hard to get off. It is hard for people to get a job if they are on welfare. If people have jobs, it is easy to get other jobs. When people work and have contacts with other people who work, then they can improve and lift themselves up. When people cannot afford the clothes needed for an interview or the nutrition needed in order to be healthy, then it becomes a trap, a trap that is very hard to escape.

I think those two items in the throne speech will lead to action in a budget speech.

Do we have to wait for the budget for legislation to be introduced? I would hope not. I would hope that from the throne speech, as we talk to ministers and give them our input that they will act on that and bring forth legislation.

As the House starts this new session, I am very hopeful but I am also very apprehensive. I want to see the legislation. I want to talk on it from the prospect of rural Canada and from the prospect of Haliburton—Victoria—Brock which has, as I said has 44 municipalities, 24 Santa Claus parades, 18 cenotaph services and three area codes. It is a large area to cover.

Some people think of Ontario, particularly southern Ontario, as being very wealthy. I can tell the House that the county of Haliburton it is not a rich county. It needs every cent it can get of government to ensure that it has the same services as other places.

*The Address*

We find this throughout northern Ontario, in the areas surrounding Sudbury and North Bay. They have nothing different than what we have in southern Ontario. We have to look at this area and know that we do not have the economic advantages of Toronto, yet we want Toronto to be healthy and vibrant and to be a city that thrives. We want Montreal and Vancouver to be the same because when they are healthy our whole economy is healthy.

I was at the Shearwater air show this year. The member for that area was very kind to me and showed me around. He introduced me to all 20 of his supporters, and we had a great time.

I have looked also at the other items in the throne speech. The ratification of the Kyoto accord to me is very important. I have already signed on to the fact that I want the accord ratified. We have to do that for the good of the earth and the good of our children.

I have looked at the throne speech from the vast agricultural riding that I represent. We have grains and oilseeds. We have 450 dairy farms. The task force of the member for Haldimand—Norfolk—Brant was excellent. It laid a good groundwork for agricultural policy for Canada. I think the Prime Minister has looked at that.

We have to ensure that the NISA programs through agriculture are fair and that they reach everyone. I am looking with great hope toward legislation coming forward from this blueprint. This is not a document that has a bunch of numbers in it. Those numbers will come with the legislation.

• (1640)

**Mr. Myron Thompson (Wild Rose, Canadian Alliance):** Madam Speaker, it was nice to be in his riding and at the county fair. I even found about 15 people that knew who he was and supported him as well. That was rather interesting because the county fair, as he knows, attracts several thousands of people and I had lots of conversations with lots of people.

When I was at the fair, I went to the farmer's market and visited with all the people who had brought exhibits. I had chats with different groups of individuals. I will ask him about three questions and I want him to make a note of them because I want an answer to every one of them.

When he visits the farmers in his constituency, how does he respond to them when in the throne speech there was one little sentence about agriculture? In my view and in the view of my constituents in my riding farming is the most important industry in the country. Does he not feel the same way and why does he not listen to what is happening with them? Why is he not talking to them about that?

Is he aware that a high majority of the people who I talk to absolutely oppose the idea of ratifying Kyoto? Yet he votes in the House of Commons.

Does he know that by the end of this month in Alberta there will probably be 14, 15 or 16 farmers who will be thrown in jail for the terrible crime of selling their grain across the border? A lot of farmers at that fair, questioned me as to why they would be thrown in jail because they broke the law of the Wheat Board, which applies to the west. Three countries do not allow their farmers to sell their own produce when it comes to wheat and barley. They are communist

China, communist North Korea and western Canada. Farmers are wondering why in the world their producers are being put in that position. I have to inform them it is because their member, along with the Liberal Party, voted to keep it as it is.

What does say to these farmers about the total inconsistency from the Ontario-Manitoba border east where farmers can do as they wish with their produce, but from the Ontario-Manitoba border west they cannot? I am really curious as to how he responds to those people who do not understand what is going on.

• (1645)

**Mr. John O'Reilly:** Madam Speaker, I know he bought a lot of stuff at the farmer's market, which helps our economy.

I do talk to farmers. In fact whenever there is a farm meeting called, I try to be at it. That is my obligation. As I said, there are 450 dairy farms in my riding. There are chicken feather groups, beef, hogs, grains and oilseeds. As we know, grains and oilseeds have taken a terrible beating on the market. Right now they are at the lowest price that they have ever been. It costs more to put them in the ground than what they get out of them. Grains and oilseeds did take a beating.

Also, I think the farmers that I talk to tell me they want fairness. They want to ensure that if Kyoto is ratified that it does not cost jobs. I am interested in that too, but I am also interested in the future of our country. I did a survey in my riding. Of the letters that have come into my constituency, 90% in favour of ratification of Kyoto. I am sure the member met people who wanted to hear his views and agreed with him.

As far as how I can counsel people who break the law, we have a law in the country. Obviously, Ontario is not in the Wheat Board and it is doing very well. Yet we have farmers who decide to go outside the law. I cannot counsel people to break the law. I do not know how anyone can do that. If we come to the House as lawmakers and then decide we do not like a particular part of the law or that it does not work for us, I cannot counsel someone to break the law. I do not want them to go to jail any more than anyone does.

I am a gun owner. I have even had the odd deer die in front of me at a camp. The fact of the matter is that I have to register my guns now because it is the law. Therefore, I will not counsel people to break the law. I will counsel people to keep the law of Canada.

**Mr. Bill Matthews (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I want to congratulate all those who have taken part in the debate, particularly the mover and seconder of the address in reply to the Speech from the Throne.

**An hon. member:** Oh, oh.

**Mr. Bill Matthews:** Madam Speaker, I listened very intently to the hon. member for Wild Rose so I would expect that he would show respect in the House and listen to what other people have to say. I know that may be very difficult, and if he did listen perhaps he would not understand it.

*The Address*

The throne speech has caused a lot of attention in the country. We are at five balanced budgets since coming to office and are now on track to our sixth after about 30 years of successive deficits. I think that is quite a remarkable feat. Having said that, let me say that there is no doubt that Canadians from coast to coast to coast have shared in that feat. It has not just been the feat of the Government of Canada. There have been a lot of sacrifices made in all parts of the country and particularly in certain sectors of the country. I want to commend Canadians for contributing and helping to bring the country into fiscal stability, which it has not had for a long time.

The throne speech mentions health care, and I think all of us who sit in the House representing various ridings and regions of the country know that health care is of huge concern to all of us and to all Canadians. Once again, the throne speech commits to further investment in health care. We are waiting for the Romanow report and of course after that the Prime Minister is committed to holding a first ministers conference on the report. Of course we all look forward to the report and to the first ministers conference. Then, and most important, we look forward to government addressing the recommendations of the report and the further investment in health care which we all need so badly. As well, the throne speech mentions commitments to infrastructure, roads and transit, and housing. Again, of course we talk about families and children.

Just a few days ago in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador, in a community in my riding, I attended a hearing of a royal commission that the Premier of Newfoundland and Labrador has established. It is a royal commission that will be holding some 23 hearings around the province. It is about strengthening Newfoundland and Labrador's place in Canada.

I attended the hearing in the community of Harbour Breton, which some colleagues, particularly on this side, know of, but I also know that my friend from the NDP has been there with me as a member of the Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans. It is still pretty much a vibrant town.

About 100 people came out to the royal commission hearing. At the outset of the hearing they were asked to identify, list and prioritize their top five concerns. They were asked to tabulate them, write them on a piece of paper, and pass them in. Then there was a tabulation to see what were the top three priorities of the people as concerns for their region. It was quite interesting. No surprise to Newfoundlanders and Labradorians or to anyone such as fisheries critics from other parties and members of the Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans, the number one concern of those people gathered in the hall that night was the state of the fishery and the need for the Government of Canada to pursue custodial management over the nose and tail of the Grand Banks and the Flemish Cap.

Anyone who is familiar with the riding that I represent in Newfoundland and Labrador would not be surprised that this issue was the number one concern for those people. It was interesting to hear the people participate, to hear what they had to say about it all. There are dire consequences for Atlantic Canada, not just Newfoundland and Labrador, because since the moratorium on ground-fish stocks, the cod stocks, was established in 1992 people have been anticipating that our stocks would have been regenerated and rejuvenated by now and people would be making better income from harvesting and processing of fish, but it has not happened. All along

that great coast of Newfoundland and Labrador people are still hurting very badly. I want to raise that because the throne speech gives us an opportunity to talk about our ridings and the issues and concerns.

The number two concern was the state of the fishery. Everything throughout that riding is totally dependent on income from fishing and from processing fish.

• (1650)

Another topic which is of concern to the people of my riding and to the people of Newfoundland and Labrador and other provinces is the current equalization program established by the federal government in consultation and concert with the provincial governments.

Here is what irks the people of Newfoundland and Labrador. We have the Hibernia offshore field, White Rose and Terra Nova, and a deal has just been signed to develop Voisey's Bay in Labrador. It looks like a deal is imminent with Quebec on another power project in Labrador. But because of increased revenues that will accrue to the province, of course, there is a clawback provision as a result. Consequently it is very difficult for provinces like Newfoundland and Labrador to get ahead. There is great concern in the province about the current equalization program. There is concern about how we can somehow address that concern so that the people of the province will be better off in the long term. It is a big concern for us.

Also, I just want to say that even though in Newfoundland and Labrador we have a very vibrant offshore oil and gas industry and good mining and forestry industries, the number one industry in Newfoundland and Labrador today, as it always has been and always will be, is our fishing industry. It will always be so because all the other industries we are talking about come from non-renewable resources. Once they run out it is over, but our renewable fish resources, if they are managed properly, should be there to provide for us forever.

These were some of the things that I wanted to talk about today in this Speech from the Throne debate. As we sit here week in and week out and hear members from all sides of the House speak about issues of concern to them, it is so very interesting to realize just how diverse this great country of ours really is. What is most interesting to me is to identify with the issues that are of concern to different regions of this country, for what is so very important to the people I represent in Newfoundland and Labrador is so different from what concerns people in the west. I have just heard an hon. member talk about the Wheat Board and the problems it is causing for the people he represents. Another member opposite talked about the salmon stocks in B.C. and some problems inherent in that. As a member of Parliament, it is quite interesting to listen to the different concerns but yet these concerns still mean as much to the people I represent as they mean to the people those members represent.

*The Address*

•(1655)

**Mr. Richard Harris (Prince George—Bulkley Valley, Canadian Alliance):** Madam Speaker, I listened with interest to the Liberal-Tory member; I am not sure exactly what he is. He talked about five years of balanced budgets. Those balanced budgets were created from six years of the highest tax increases in the history of any government. That is how the government balanced the budget: on the backs of Canadians. Now, although the Liberals will not admit it, they are preparing for probably the biggest tax grab in the history of Canada and that is the Kyoto issue.

Kyoto will raise the base price of every drop of oil or gas produced in this country. It will raise the base price of manufactured products in this country. It will raise the base price of every product or service remotely connected to the Kyoto protocol. Guess what? To all these price increases will be added the GST and it will create a windfall, a GST windfall as a result of the implementation of Kyoto. That is what is behind this Kyoto march. It has nothing to do with the environment. It is all about the Liberal government's insatiable appetite for taxes. It is going to try to tax Canadians by stealth through the Kyoto protocol. Will it not just simply admit its real agenda behind Kyoto?

**Mr. Bill Matthews:** Madam Speaker, I want to thank the hon. member for his comment and his question, but it seems that some of the members in the official opposition have great difficulty in not being nasty. They want to be nasty about everything. They cannot bring civility to debate. They get up and call me different things, one of those members who probably came here when it was called Reform, and then I think it was Canadian Alliance and then the CCRAP party. I do not want to get down into that. I would rather stick to the issues.

With the great downturn in the North American and world economies, everyone in Canada knows that one of the reasons why the Canadian economy has done so well is the government's action in tax reduction. It has put more money into the pockets of Canadians. That is why our economy has outperformed the U.S. economy. When we compare the Canadian economy with those of the rest of the G-7 we are so far ahead because of the actions of the government. The government has consistently reduced taxes. It has put more money into the pockets of Canadians who spend and drive the engine of the economy of the country.

For the hon. member to stand here today and somehow expect Canadians or particularly anyone in the House to believe that the government has been on a tax increase program is totally unacceptable. It is definitely not true and all hon. members know it. The government has been on a tax reduction program for years. It is why today the economy of the country is as strong as it is and it is why Canadians are doing so well, as they are.

•(1700)

**Mr. Peter Stoffer (Sackville—Musquodoboit Valley—Eastern Shore, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Burin—St. George's knows very well that it was this government that imposed the airline security tax of \$24, taking from air travellers millions and millions of dollars.

My question for the hon. member is about the following. The disability tax credit change by the government is one of the most

reprehensible things the government has ever done to the most vulnerable people in our society. We are taking away an average of \$600 per disability tax credit claim from the most vulnerable in our society, people who left their legs over in France during the war, people who are severely disabled. The government, through the finance minister, is changing the definition of feeding and clothing oneself. I would hope that the hon. member, who represents his constituents and does a good job, does not support that finance minister in these changes.

What is the hon. member prepared to do to stop this cruel punishment of the most vulnerable in our society?

**Mr. Bill Matthews:** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the hon. member for his comment and his question. It is a question on an issue that I am sure concerns every member of the House. It has been an issue for quite a while with many of us because it has been brought to our attention by people who are being directly affected in a negative way, the most vulnerable people in society. That is who they are.

I can tell the hon. member that like many members, particularly on this side of the House, and I am sure on the other side as well, we have brought this issue to the forefront for discussions with the Minister of Finance, in front of the Prime Minister and in front of the national caucus. I am hoping that the matter will be resolved as it should be resolved.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Pierre Paquette (Joliette, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to say that I will be sharing my time with the hon. member for Terrebonne—Blainville.

A response to such a Speech from the Throne is, ironically, both too long and too short. We only get ten minutes. Ten minutes to criticize what was absent from the speech. That is not much time. This Speech from the Throne made no reference to the fiscal imbalance between Ottawa and the provinces, particularly Quebec.

The speech contained nothing on Quebec's demands regarding parental leave, an issue that has been ignored for many years. There is nothing in terms of changes and improvements to employment insurance. A number of Liberal ministers made promises to that effect during the 2000 election campaign. There was no mention of a plan to help the softwood lumber industry and its workers.

Ironically, as I said, ten minutes is not nearly enough time to talk about all that is missing from this Speech from the Throne. However, ten minutes is too much time to talk about what was in the Speech from the Throne. Basically, let us be honest, it is a condensed and rehashed version of what the federal Liberals have been serving since 1993, since their infamous red book.

It is a wish list that they were never prepared to act on. Still today, the speech reminds us that we must fight against child poverty. For nine years, the Liberals have had the opportunity, through all sorts of measures that come under their jurisdiction, to fight child poverty, and they did nothing.

*The Address*

The speech mentions how health is a priority. We know that the government now pays only 14% of health care costs in Quebec, and in all of the provinces. In recent days, we have seen newspaper ads in Canada and Quebec paid for by all of the provinces and territories, reminding us of this fact. There is consensus among the provinces and territories on this. The consensus within Quebec is very strong. All three parties in the National Assembly support the position outlined in the Séguin commission's report. In the end, other than paying lip service to the fact that the health of Canadians and Quebecers is a priority of the government, there are no real measures to improve the situation in health care.

Overall, I have come to realize in my time in this House that there is a rather simple formula that could be applied to the way the current Prime Minister of Canada functions, or to his heritage. The federal Liberals' slogan could well be "Signal left, then turn right". There are extremely conservative policies with a focus on empire-building, a vision I might call arrogant as far as part of the population and some of the provinces of Canada are concerned. It is always extremely centralist and lacking in transparency. I have quickly listed 16 areas of encroachment into areas of Quebec and provincial jurisdiction. Once again, this is a just a wish list.

Imagine, when the policies are truly known, what attacks will be launched on Quebec once again. I think the label for the present Prime Minister's era will be the era of confrontation. There is nothing in the throne speech, nothing in the speeches by his presumed successor and former finance minister to suggest anything new with the federal Liberals in the medium or long term.

Now that I am the finance critic, I will try to concentrate on that area, so I will give as an example, from page 10 of the Speech from the Throne.

The government will work with all participants to ensure that Canada has the modern and efficient securities regulatory system it needs.

This very day, the Minister of Finance has announced the appointment of Harold MacKay as his special representative to advise on Canadian securities regulation.

The main problem is that, according to the Canadian Constitution, securities regulation is a provincial responsibility. What is the federal government doing announcing the appointment today of a special advisor on Canadian securities regulation when this is absolutely not under its jurisdiction?

• (1705)

It will tell me that some people in Canada, especially Ontario, are pushing for this idea of a federal securities regulation agency. The president of the Ontario Securities Commission says that it would be a good idea to have a Canada-wide federal agency to look after securities, although this is not a federal jurisdiction.

The idea is to have this federal agency's head office in Toronto and to once again give Toronto a leg up as the financial centre for all of Canada, to the detriment of Montreal in particular, as well as Vancouver. We are not stupid.

Behind this initiative, which addresses a real concern of small shareholders, who were cheated by some less than scrupulous directors of large companies, the federal government is taking advantage of this concern to further centralize in an area outside its

jurisdiction. It is doing this to the detriment of Montreal and the Quebec financial market.

We must be very clear about this. As Quebec's Minister of Finance, Pauline Marois, has said repeatedly, we are not unwilling to harmonize securities regulations, but we want to take into account the regional reality of financial markets.

In Quebec, for example, we have the Civil Code. Like it or not, the federal government will have to take into account the reality in Quebec, which is that we operate under the Civil Code and not the common law.

Why have a Canada-wide agency, which will still have to take into account Quebec's distinct character? If it does not, it will be ineffective and will not meet the needs of small shareholders and investors.

Furthermore, a Canada-wide agency will make the process more cumbersome. We know how bureaucratized this government is and we know that the entire federal administration is extremely slow. The Government of Quebec has led the way after the financial fiascos in the United States, the Enron scandal in particular. Right now, it has a parliamentary committee considering Bill 107, which will create new offences and impose tougher penalties on the directors of companies which falsify their financial statements.

Quebec has been able, within its existing jurisdiction, to react rapidly to a situation which demanded action.

In the Speech from the Throne, and the Minister of Justice repeated this during oral question period, issues are being reviewed to see whether some legislative amendments are required. The government talks about ways to strengthen their implementation. It is still looking at what should be done, while in Quebec we have already dealt with all the problems resulting from the scandals in the United States.

If the federal government wants to do something, it can take action in its own jurisdiction. The Bloc Québécois proposed a number of measures, including creating a new offence for insider trading. The penalty for this offence could be a 10-year jail term. Under this offence, business executives would be prohibited from using confidential information for personal gain. Such an offence does not exist in the Criminal Code. We could create one.

A new offence could be created for securities fraud. This offence, which would be patterned on the measures adopted in the United States, could carry a 10-year jail term. It would prohibit fraud when selling or buying securities. Such a measure comes under federal jurisdiction. The government could also amend the offence relating to the falsification of books and documents under section 397 of the Criminal Code, to specifically target the falsification of financial statements. The penalties provided under section 397 of the Criminal Code could be increased from five to ten years.

*The Address*

These are issues that the federal government should tackle, because it has the constitutional legitimacy to do so.

But the federal government is not interested in doing that. It is interested in increasing its powers. It wants to do so at the expense of Quebec but, unfortunately, it also does it at the expense of the other provinces.

Let us hope that, in the rest of Canada, people will begin to realize that, behind all these policies, there is a philosophy that is in sharp contrast with the philosophy that led to the creation of Canada.

• (1710)

Personally, I do not think that this system can be corrected. This is why I believe that this Speech from the Throne is further evidence that the federal government is denying the existence of a fiscal imbalance and that Quebec sovereignty is the only way for Quebecers to achieve their full potential.

[English]

**Mr. Peter Adams (Peterborough, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I enjoy listening to the member. He is very eloquent and I have listened to him over a number of years.

I would like to ask him a question about the part of the Speech from the Throne that dealt with access to colleges, CEGEPs and universities, including the province of Quebec.

All the provincial governments have cut spending on post-secondary education. It is not just the province of Quebec but every province has, and Quebec less than many of the others. The Speech from the Throne mentions that the federal government has begun to support the indirect costs of research in colleges and universities. That has been well received in Quebec because of the way infrastructure programs in the colleges and universities have been cut.

However the Speech from the Throne talked about access to university and college and the province of Quebec is to be complimented on the fact that throughout these cuts it has kept tuition fees at the lowest in Canada. Young Quebecers can now go to college and university at a much lower price, about one-third of the cost of going to school in Ontario.

The Speech from the Throne mentions specifically that the federal government will try to do something to improve access to post-secondary education. Does the member have any ideas as to how the federal government should best proceed to help the government of Quebec, which has already kept tuition fees down, to improve access to post-secondary education in Canada?

• (1715)

[Translation]

**Mr. Pierre Paquette:** Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his question, because I believe that the points that he raises are very important indeed. While standing in for a colleague of mine, I attended meetings of the Standing Committee on Industry, Sciences and Technology where we heard testimony from universities, particularly from the Maritime provinces, complaining about the lack of grants to cover the indirect costs of research. So there is a real problem from that perspective. We are being told there will be a solution, and we will see what the government comes up with.

However, I think that the best way for the federal government to respect provincial jurisdiction and Canada's constitution would be to increase the transfers, the Canada Health and Social Transfer. Or better yet, given the surplus that has been accumulated in recent years and that is expected in the coming years—I am referring here to the Conference Board study that was conducted for the provinces—the federal government could withdraw completely from part of the tax field in order to allow the provinces to fulfill their constitutional responsibilities.

We will recall that the federal government only contributes eight cents of every dollar spent in education. This is true for Quebec, but it is also true for the other provinces. So, I think that it should be one of these two approaches: either increase the transfers to the provinces, or withdraw from the tax field. The Séguin commission proposed a withdrawal from the goods and services tax field, for example, to correct the fiscal imbalance.

I will close by reminding the House of one thing. The issue of fiscal imbalance is about more than finances. It is about democracy. When the provinces no longer have the means to fulfill their constitutional responsibilities, it becomes difficult for them to remain autonomous in terms of policy, and they lose their accountability to their citizens when it comes to the policy choices that they make. Personally, I believe that we could do it, if there was a real will to correct the current federal shortcomings. We have the means to do so, but, as I indicated, I think that the political will to correct existing imbalances has been dead for many years in Canada.

**Ms. Diane Bourgeois (Terrebonne—Blainville, BQ):** 88Mr. Speaker, it is my turn to have an opportunity to express my views on the Speech from the Throne. As you are no doubt aware, I am the Bloc Québécois critic on the status of women. As such, I will try to reflect the concerns of the women of Canada and of Quebec in my speech. The throne speech we have been treated to has added nothing new, as a number of my colleagues have already pointed out in the past few days.

I would go still further: in this political last will and testament, the government is perpetuating the social disparities and social exclusion affecting the majority of the population, that is women.

Behind all the empty promises, it is impossible to detect any real commitment by the federal government. Worse still, this speech is indicative of the government's total lack of concern for women.

The federal government is announcing that it will throw a few crumbs to women, thus continuing to impoverish them, their families and, consequently, their children. Crumbs, because women are the ones most likely to be poor. Ottawa has done nothing to ensure them of fair treatment, economic and social parity.

The women of Quebec and Canada have always shouldered their share of responsibilities and they wish to remind the Prime Minister that federal cuts to transfer payments earmarked for services and activities relating to health, education and social programs have worsened the poverty of women and, as a result, of their children as well.



*The Address*

Women thought it wise to wait for the Prime Minister's clarifications in his speech following the reading of the Speech from the Throne. They were right to do so. There is nothing anywhere indicating any measures aimed at improving women's living conditions; nothing about the demands made by the world march of women; nothing about the interference in areas under Quebec jurisdiction; nothing but an intrusion that will bring more upheaval of which the population will bear the brunt; nothing but a government strategy for bolstering its centralizing power.

Once again, we find that women, who make up more than 50% of the population, are the ones left out of the government leader's political testament. Not only are they cut out of the will, they are totally ignored and frustrated of their right to be given the consideration they deserve. This lack of consideration, this ignoring of their existence, clearly sums up the situation of the women of Quebec and the women of Canada as well.

Battered women often tell us that it is far easier to get over a blow or an insult than to survive being treated with indifference or ignored, as they often are. They also tell us that economic dependency adds to their distress and greatly lessens their chances of escaping from their situation.

However, in its statements, the government has shown that it does not understand the problems women face; it is therefore perpetuating the cycle of violence. Worse, because of their lack of interest for the plight of women in Canada and in Quebec, the Prime Minister and his government are sending a clear message that they are not taking into account the differences and specificities of both women and the provinces.

Yet, in September 2001, the meeting of the federal, provincial and territorial ministers and secretaries of state responsible for the status of women pointed out the commitments and the scope of the investments made by the Quebec government to improve living conditions for women. All the ministers and secretaries of state in Canada showed a great deal of interest in the Quebec's achievements, and they stressed how innovative the measures taken by Quebec in all areas relating to the status of women were.

● (1720)

The ministers and secretaries of state also pledged to strengthen the economic independence of women and to ensure their active participation in the labour market. They also pledged to continue their action, so that tax policies take into account the unpaid work done by natural caregivers. That was one year ago. I should also point out that the concept of parental leave put forward by the federal government was openly criticized, while the one presented by the Quebec government was truly innovative.

Quebec women expected, and this is normal, to find in the federal government's priorities concrete measures to properly deal with the chronic poverty in which they and their children are living. This fine Speech from the Throne does claim that, as a democratic society, we can define our needs and rest assured that they will be met. But who will hear us? And what guarantees do we have that we will get the support and help necessary to get our children out of poverty? There are no such guarantees in this speech.

Women now know that this government does not intend to recognize them and provide them with adequate support. Nothing in this speech guarantees a better quality of life for all women and their families. On the contrary, the government will continue to exclude women, which will have the effect of keeping them poor. Worse still, the government will continue to boldly and contemptuously bring about social disparities, leading to more poverty, including in the middle class, thus dashing the hopes these families have of improving their financial lot and playing an active role in social and community development. Through its indifference and its inability to recognize the particular problems, the government is once again forcing women to shoulder the tax burden of the inadequate and outdated measures it continues to promote.

Women reflect the province they come from. The women of Canada and Quebec are finding fair and intelligent solutions to the many social problems. Over the years, they have built up expertise and innovated with solutions that address the social and economic concerns of all members of the public. They have invested in a social vision, without waiting for the federal government to support them. They have mistakenly believed that, over time, not only would the government recognize their efforts, but that it would ensure adequate and decent funding in order to help them in the fight against poverty, just as Quebec has tried to go beyond the limits imposed by a centralizing federal government which deliberately ignores its distinct character.

The federal government is no more taking into account the demands of women than it is the legitimate demands of Quebec. This is an attitude that defies common sense and logic.

In the coming months, women and the Bloc Québécois will be looking closely at the motivations and behaviour of a government which is doing nothing to eliminate the poverty of women and which is, on the contrary, continuing by its stubbornness to keep us in poverty. Canadians, like Quebecers, are entitled to the respect and recognition of the federal government.

It is time that this government took note that there are areas, programs and activities where women are exercising their skills according to the needs of their community and according to the needs of their province.

It is also time that the government stopped interfering in programs under provincial jurisdiction. If it wants to fight poverty, it would make more sense for it to invest in the autonomy of women and the provinces, rather than eradicating a chronic problem across the board, which is of no help.

● (1725)

Children are poor because their mothers are regularly victimized by social injustices caused by the lack of respect for differences and the ignorance of the federal government when it comes to the specific reality of women in Quebec.

[English]

**Mr. Peter Adams (Peterborough, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the member has an important critic's portfolio which she takes very seriously. I am pleased that the women of Canada have someone like her in their corner.

*The Address*

Part of the Speech from the Throne that I really liked was under the health care portion. It was the part that dealt with lifestyle, with exercise among children and the general population and the suggestion that we will move in the areas of diet and try to prevent illness as much as we possibly can.

I would like to point out, from the recent report from the first ministers on indicators of health, that the lung cancer mortality rate for women in Canada is still rising. It is almost 35% compared with 27% for the population at large. It points out that the prevalence of smoking among teenagers still continues to be high compared with the rest of the population. It is particularly high among women and first nations.

Would the member have any thoughts about ways in which we could address these lifestyle matters in the population in general but particularly with respect to women and teenage women?

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Diane Bourgeois:** Mr. Speaker, I thank the members opposite for their questions.

I do not have a personal answer to this type of question, as I am not an expert. What I do know, however, is that there are women's groups in Quebec and probably in the other provinces of Canada that work specifically to improve the living conditions of women.

Indeed, when people are educated, when they have a certain level of education, they are able to stay informed about habits that have a negative impact on their health. Obviously, it is very difficult for a woman to see a male doctor and talk about health issues, just as it is difficult for a man to see a female doctor to discuss his prostate. Let us not fool ourselves. It is normal to be shy about some things.

If we advocate having more women professionals to deal with women, then we will have to invest more money in organizations that will be there to help women. Incidentally, in closing, I would just like to remind the member opposite that during the World March of Women, there were 13 demands that came from one Canadian committee of the World March of Women. Women were asking for money to put an end to violence, obviously, but also for women's centres, sexual assault centres and women's shelters.

• (1730)

**Mr. Réal Ménard (Hochelaga—Maisonneuve, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to make the following request of my colleague from Terrebonne—Blainville. She has clearly indicated that the federal government is not responding to the legitimate demands and aspirations of women's groups.

Would she be so kind as to give us some examples?

**Ms. Diane Bourgeois:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for this opportunity to add a little more information to my speech, or to at least clarify some of my points.

I think there are two main aspects arising from my colleague's questions. First, there is the aspect of women's demands. I agree that this needs to be discussed and will respond to his question.

There is one aspect that must not be lost sight of, however. If, in the year 2000, women were making demands, and still are—and in fact were making them earlier than that, when one thinks of the

Bread and Roses March—what is always involved is getting their children out of poverty and lessening the poverty of families.

What are these women asking for? They are calling for social measures, not only ad hoc ones, but also measures that will provide them with assistance in getting into the work force.

To take the example of the employment insurance program, how can a woman who has had a family, who has not been able to accumulate the number of weeks required, be able to draw employment insurance benefits? I am sorry to say that self-employed workers are not covered by the parental leave program, and more and more women are trying to make ends meet through this type of employment.

I am being told that my time is up; unfortunately, I will not be able to devote any more time to this extremely important response.

[*English*]

**Mr. Peter Adams (Peterborough, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for Kitchener—Waterloo.

We are talking about the Speech from the Throne. It seems to me that what happens is the Prime Minister and the government look across the federal system, across Canada and across the globe where they find certain themes. They boil them down into this relatively short speech which we have been debating now for a number of days. The speech gives us a sort of overview, or blueprint or perhaps a vision of what the government intends to do in the next number of years. That is the nature of the Speech from the Throne.

What happens then in the House is that all members of Parliament take this theme, which is already a concentration and a summary of a great deal of information, and we look in it for large things or small things which interest us greatly.

On this side of the House, for example, we look for nuggets of interest which are of specific interest to us. On the other side, they look for holes in it and they pick the holes. This is not an unhealthy process but we do have to remember that the Speech from the Throne is a whole.

What I would like to do, if it is possible in a short time, is to talk about it a little bit as a whole and then a couple of the nuggets which interest me particularly.

This is a bit like trying to take a folded umbrella and opening it up to see what the main struts are in the umbrella. In this case one of them is, without a doubt, health care. It has been mentioned time and time again by people on all sides.

The government essentially says that the Romanow commission, which we commissioned, will report soon, the government will act pretty quickly with the first ministers and the government has committed, if necessary, federal funds to that process.

As I was just discussing with one of the other members, it also suggests that the government is particularly interested in exercise, lifestyle, diet and other aspects of preventive measures in the health care system. I like that. I like the idea of inoculation programs around the country. I like the idea of dental programs in schools and things of that type.

*The Address*

Another strut of this umbrella is Kyoto and climate change. What has happened, and it is not just this generation but since the industrial revolution, we human beings have steadily poisoned the atmosphere that we breath. The atmosphere is more poisonous now than it was 100, 150 or 200 years ago everywhere: out in the middle of the oceans and on top of the mountains where it is more poisonous. However it is particularly poisonous in the communities where we live. Some 80% of us now live in large cities.

One result, and it is only one, of that poisoning is global warming and the heating up of the atmosphere. The poisons we put into the atmosphere, among other things, are causing it to heat up. Climate deals with that. It deals with the melting of the ice caps, the increase in the level of the oceans and things like that.

Another theme is the cities. I mentioned that 80% of us now live in cities. It also deals with, among other things, homelessness which is something that we have to tackle at this time.

Yet another theme, one of the structural parts of the Speech from the Throne, is national infrastructure. This is a huge country. Transportation is always an endless problem for us all. By the way, at the present time infrastructure related to water, which is part of the atmospheric system that we have poisoned, is a part of the system.

Regarding skills and innovation, I asked a question earlier about access to post-secondary education and research. The increase in grants to the granting councils which fund the research will help us solve many of these problems. The government is committed to increase their funding, and I hope it particularly increases the grants to the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council.

Agriculture and the rural areas are also mentioned. In July we flowed \$5.2 billion, \$600 million of which is going out as we speak, to the rural areas and to our farmers. I am pleased about that. The cities and the rural areas rely on each other. It is not that one is more important than the other. It is that they are linked and both have to be healthy.

Throughout this speech there is an important structural part for the first nations.

• (1735)

The speech talks about Canada and the poorer nations. The Prime Minister looked at our relations with the rest of the world so that there would be no tariffs for goods coming from these poorer nations, to give them a chance to work, sell their products and build themselves up rather than us paying directly. We cannot do that. They have to have self-confidence.

Children are one of the main struts in the health care part, in the exercise piece that I mentioned, as well as in access to education.

Those are the struts. Of course, they are all linked. As I mentioned, it is like an umbrella. For example, health care is linked to Kyoto. Kyoto deals with the poisoned atmosphere. One of the reasons that standards of health are low in various parts of the country has to do with the change in the status of the atmosphere. Health care is linked to the first nations and to the children that I just mentioned. The different parts are linked.

Kyoto, which is one of the struts, is linked to the cities. A lot of the emissions that produce global warming come from the cities. The infrastructure piece is linked to Kyoto. For example, if we in Peterborough can get VIA Rail service instead of people commuting in their cars to and from Toronto, we will improve the atmosphere and contribute to Canada's contribution to the Kyoto accord.

Again, the skills agenda ties in with health care. All these things are linked. The city and the county of Peterborough has a shortage of medical doctors, nurses and skilled technicians. The country at large is short of research scientists. These things are the basis of prosperity. The skills and knowledge piece is tied to health care and health care is tied to skills.

Urban and rural issues are linked the way that I described. In terms of Canada and the other nations, we can never forget that there are 210 or 220 other countries out there and, on moral grounds, we should be thinking of the poorest nations, but also, for our own good, in terms of global security.

There are main thrusts in the Speech from the Throne and links between them all, and we should never lose sight of that.

My point simply is that to pick away at the Speech from the Throne, and it is not an unhealthy exercise to find holes or, for me, to find little tiny things in it and pretend that is all there is in it, is not the way to go. That is the overview.

I would like to refer to two smaller things which are my nuggets, the small things which, like other members, I am interested in. One of them has to do with federal research.

One of the great contributions of the federal government to our whole system is research. For example the support we give farmers includes research in agriculture. The speech states that the government will coordinate and focus the research capacity of the federal government so that it is much more effective than it is now. I urge the federal government to do that. I urge it to start by focusing it on northern research to help our people in the north, which is a very special federal responsibility.

The second one of these small points, given that I do not have more time, is the government's statement that it will create more opportunities for young Canadians to help clean up our environment and assist in achieving Canada's global priorities, particularly Africa. I urge the government to move on that. We had Katimavik some decades ago. We have Katimavik today doing fine work in Canada but not working overseas. It may be that we will not simply put the money into Katimavik but I urge the government to do something to harness the energies of our young people, to help in the environment, to help themselves in Canada and to work overseas to help the poorer nations.

*The Address*

•(1740)

**Mr. Peter Stoffer (Sackville—Musquodoboit Valley—Eastern Shore, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate the member on his speech and definitely let him know that I agree with him in terms of Katimavik and assisting our young people in helping clean up this planet, not only at home but abroad as well.

While we are talking about helping people, one of the things the government is planning to do—and I am not personally going after the member in this regard but he knows very well what I am about to speak to—is make changes to the disability tax credit.

The throne speech is grand on words. Everybody is supposed to feel so much better about this but the reality is that people in the country with disabilities are being attacked by the policies of the government. The finance minister has proposed changes regarding feeding and clothing oneself and telling people that if they can go 50 metres on a level surface with a device, even if they need to rest along the way, they will no longer qualify for the disability tax credit, which is only \$1,000 a year maximum claim. The average claim is only \$600. So 106,000 people were sent this notice and thousands more are about to receive it. Under no circumstances was the Canadian Medical Association advised. In fact it has said very clearly that it should be up to the medical profession to determine a disability, not the bureaucrats in Ottawa.

My question to the respected member of the House is, what is he prepared to do to push his government to stop this reprehensible attack on the most vulnerable in our society?

**Mr. Peter Adams:** Mr. Speaker, like the member, I was pleased that the Speech from the Throne specifically mentioned people with disabilities and, in particular, as he knows, families supporting people with disabilities. My hope is that we will follow through on those matters.

On the matter of the disability tax credit, I think the member exaggerates. When dealing with a group of people who are disabled, it is difficult to examine programs in different government areas, let us say, for veterans and things like that, in terms of efficiency and in terms of getting the best value for the money. I would suggest to the hon. member that the Government of Canada always has to do that. It does not matter how well meaning a program is, a program has to be efficient. If it is not, then the people who need the program will be the ones who suffer most.

As I understand it, the exercise going on at the moment is to say, yes, we must support these people with disabilities, but is the money being allocated in the best possible way. That is the exercise.

I understand that doing that does create great concern among the constituency, and I know the hon. member is responding to that, but I would urge him to wait to see what the outcome will be of the exercise and then see if the program is worse or better. It is my sincere hope that the program will be better once this exercise has been completed.

•(1745)

**Mr. David Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I was going to talk about a different issue, and I may get to it, but I guess I am disturbed by the comment the member made about the disability tax credit program.

I agree with my colleague from the NDP, which does not happen very often, but this has been a brutal thing for many people to go through. I know examples of people who have been denied that tax credit who will not recover and will not be able to function fully in our society. That is not fair.

As the government goes through this process it needs to be careful in what it is doing, as my hon. colleague said, to the most vulnerable in our society.

I also want to bring up another issue. Softwood lumber has been a big issue in our country over the last year. The only comment made about agriculture in the throne speech had to do with the fact that the government was going to look at trade action regarding softwood and agricultural issues.

I do not know if my colleague knows this, but the North Dakota wheat growers and other organizations are beginning to pursue a trade action against western Canadian farmers. By the end of this week they will be able to make a decision as to whether that action is going to the international trade commission. By November 4 they will be in the situation where they may be able to put sanctions and tariffs of up to 35% to 40% against western Canadian wheat.

The government was not prepared to deal with softwood lumber. It is not prepared to deal with this issue of wheat. Now that my colleague knows about this, what is he prepared to do? Will he work with us and western Canadian farmers to deal with another trade issue that is exploding and one with which government is unprepared to deal?

**Mr. Peter Adams:** Mr. Speaker, on the first matter, I am surprised that the hon. member would question efforts to make a very caring program accountable.

On accountability, as I have explained, it is very difficult in the case of programs like that to be hard-nosed. It would be the same as when the hon. member picks up on other programs of government and says that the government is not accountable. I am really surprised that he is unwilling to go through that process.

With regard to the people he mentioned, if he could share their files, and he would need their permission to do that, I would be glad to follow through on them with him. However I do believe that it is the responsibility of government to be accountable for the taxpayers' money.

On the second question—

**The Deputy Speaker:** I regret to interrupt but I have been generous and a number of other colleagues are waiting. I am sure hon. members will have the opportunity to share.

**Mr. Andrew Telegdi (Kitchener—Waterloo, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I welcome this opportunity to comment on the Speech from the Throne.

I start by thanking the voters of my riding of Kitchener—Waterloo for affording me the privilege to represent them in the Parliament of Canada. I am sure all my colleagues in the House feel the same way regarding their respective constituencies.

*The Address*

This is the sixth and final throne speech under our present Prime Minister and represents for the most part our Liberal values and priorities.

Since taking office in 1993 we have eliminated the \$43 billion annual deficit that we inherited and have produced five consecutive surplus budgets. The Liberals believe that people need a hand up, not a handout and that the best social policy is job creation.

During the Liberal mandate, unemployment has fallen from 11.2% in 1993 to 7.6% nationally now and from 9% in 1993 to 5.5% in my community. We have restored the fiscal sovereignty of Canada, protected our social safety net, strengthened the unity of the country, replaced despair with hope and for the most part governed well.

Much of the credit goes to our Prime Minister and the Liberal team, including our newest backbencher, the former minister of finance. I also recognize the valuable role played by my colleagues in the opposition who for the most part have held the government accountable and have proposed many useful suggestions. The alarm they are raising about the disability legislation is a good example of that. In fact, the contributions made by all members of the House have played an important part in the life of the nation of which we are all so very proud.

In terms of the safety and security of Canadians, I am very heartened by our government's reaffirmation of our commitment to work through the United Nations to ensure that the rule of international law is respected and enforced. Unilateral, bilateral, trilateral military action can only serve to undermine the coalition against terrorism we have worked so hard to build and will threaten to destabilize a volatile region of the world.

With respect to children and foreign aid, I am very pleased by our commitment to increase the national child benefit and our international development assistance, which reflects our great Canadian values of fairness and compassion. It is only right that we offer disadvantaged people the opportunity to break out of the cycle of poverty.

In terms of our first nations, I want to pay special tribute to Chief Buddy Recalma and members of his family in Qualicum, British Columbia, who sensitized me to the plight of the aboriginal people. I admire their tireless advocacy for accountability and transparency in first nations governance. I strongly support the promise to close the gap in life chances between aboriginal and non-aboriginal Canadians through new health, skills development and education programs for youths. Legislation to strengthen first nations governance must be done in partnership with the first nations.

I support ratifying the Kyoto protocol. It is part of our commitment to leaving a clean, healthy, sustainable, natural environment as our legacy for our children and all future generations.

Health care is one of the most important priorities we have as a government. I look forward, as do all members of this House, to the report of the Romanow commission. I sincerely hope that it addresses the issues of national pharmacare and home care for our senior citizens. These are important services that were not mentioned in the throne speech.

Much has been said in this House over the years about brain drain. We have not talked enough about brain waste. I strongly urge that we extend to internationally trained Canadian physicians the commitment we made to work toward breaking down the barriers to recognize their credentials and those of potential immigrants.

It is ironic that our region of Waterloo needs approximately 40 more doctors to serve the nearly 50,000 people who are without family doctors. Even though these doctors have passed the Canadian Medical Association exams, they are still unable to practise here. This is a brain waste.

• (1750)

We have a shortage of doctors, nurses, medical technicians and other professionals due to the supposed brain drain. Therefore we can ill afford to waste the years of education and training of the experienced foreign trained physicians, engineers and architects living in our communities. This brain waste must end. Thousands of internationally trained Canadians must be given the opportunity to contribute their talents to our nation.

At 4:25 today I received an e-mail on a case that I have been following closely. It involves a physician trained in Yugoslavia who passed the medical exams given by the Canadian Medical Association over two years ago. He is still unable to secure an internship position which would allow him to practise medicine in this country. That must stop.

In the area of research and development, education and innovation, I am very pleased to learn that we will be increasing funding to the federal granting councils. The knowledge based economy is the economy of the future. My community of Kitchener—Waterloo is a perfect example of that economy.

My community is home to Conestoga College, Wilfrid Laurier University and the University of Waterloo. These schools themselves have created tens of thousands of jobs in our region and Canada. The innovators that they have graduated have created new enterprises that have produced many well paying jobs. Communitech and Canada's Technology Triangle are two important representatives of these groups.

Their contribution is reflected in the changing face of industry in my riding. As product manufacturing companies like Labatt, Seagrams, Van Dresser and Ontario Trim have departed, high tech companies such as Research in Motion, GFI, IMS, Open Text and Dalsa have taken their place. We must position ourselves as world leaders and we must continue to invest in our young people and our future researchers.

One of our captains of industry, Mike Lazaridis, who was named the Canadian who made the greatest contribution to Canada in the past year by the *Globe and Mail* said, "Let us brand Canada as the wisest nation on the planet".

With respect to the issue of citizenship, I am particularly pleased that the government has committed in the throne speech to reform our citizenship legislation to reassert the rights and reinforce the responsibilities that go with being Canadian.

*The Address*

The new Citizenship Act must reflect the fact that Canada has become a pluralistic multicultural country. There is no place for two classes of citizens. The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms gives all citizens, whether they are Canadians by choice or by birth, the same rights and obligations. The flawed citizenship revocation process in the present Citizenship Act does not provide fundamental justice and confers second class status on six million naturalized Canadians.

I am pleased to note that the Liberal Party of British Columbia as well as the Liberal Party of Ontario have made it a priority resolution which is being sent to the national convention that the Citizenship Act incorporate the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

There are many more pieces of legislation being proposed in the throne speech, but I will touch on one more point. The government is considering the decriminalization of marijuana.

It is time to end the cynicism felt by many of our citizens across the country who have heard about Bill Clinton having smoked marijuana and Kim Campbell, our former Prime Minister, having smoked marijuana. George Bush smoked marijuana and other stuff. A number of cabinet ministers have admitted to smoking marijuana.

We must end the hypocrisy of saddling many young people with criminal records when the law should be changed. I commend the position taken by the Senate committee. In terms of our drug strategy, we have to work toward taking organized crime out of drugs. If we manage to do it, we will eliminate many victims and will create a stronger society.

• (1755)

**Mr. Philip Mayfield (Cariboo—Chilcotin, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I was interested in the promotion of marijuana here today. Medical people are saying tobacco smoke is so harmful, that perhaps the nicotine will not kill us but the carrier of the nicotine in the smoke is what damages us, so it really amazes me that at the same time more smoking that will result in all of the side effects that smoking tobacco causes is being advocated. I am really amazed that people on the government side are advocating what would be a habit that debilitates people's health.

I understand there are people such as cancer victims who use it for special purposes to relieve discomfort. I do not have an argument with people looking for comfort, but to encourage people by saying that smoking marijuana is harmless really is irresponsible in my mind.

I would like to hear the member's comments about how he can advocate smoking marijuana when the smoke itself is so harmful. It is a pollutant. It is a contaminant. We take it into our bodies and our bodies do not like it.

• (1800)

**Mr. Andrew Telegdi:** Mr. Speaker, I think my friend missed the point I was trying to make. My point is very simple. The present drug strategy is not working. We should think back to the time of prohibition in the United States. What we have is a great boost in organized crime by making trafficking in drugs a profitable enterprise for organized crime.

The chiefs of police are in favour of decriminalization. The least thing I am doing is advocating the use of marijuana. What I am

saying is the strategy we have followed has not worked and there are better strategies to deal with it. The tremendous amount of resources that have been spent on a failed drug strategy could be much better used through education to cut down on the use of drugs in this country.

It is a social problem and the criminal solutions have not worked. All they have done is fed the coffers of organized crime. It is time to get our heads around it. There are many victims in Canada who are victims of crimes driven by drugs. What drives those crimes is that too many people have become addicted because it has been promoted by organized crime. That is what we have to put a stop to.

**Mr. Inky Mark (Dauphin—Swan River, PC):** Mr. Speaker, I want to commend the hon. member for his response to the Speech from the Throne. I know that over the years he has certainly supported the theme of equal citizenship and equal rights for all Canadians regardless of whether they were born in this country or immigrated to this country.

While the throne speech addressed that vacuum and I understand the government will be tabling a new citizenship bill later on in the session, does the member think that his government will make those right changes for all Canadians?

**Mr. Andrew Telegdi:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for that question because he certainly has been supportive in trying to ensure that six million Canadians who are citizens by choice and not by birth have the protection of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms when it comes to defending their citizenship. Many members on the other side of the House supported me in that battle but unfortunately the members on my side of the House did not.

As I mentioned in my speech, both the Liberal Party of British Columbia as well as the Liberal Party of Ontario have passed resolutions that are going to the national policy convention to get the legislation changed. There is an awareness across the country that was not there before. I suspect the government will make the right move in restoring or giving rights to Canadians who as I said are citizens by choice and not by birth.

**Mr. Charlie Penson (Peace River, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the member for Crowfoot.

I am thankful for the opportunity to respond to Monday's throne speech. I look forward to critique the government's throne speech and what we might expect in terms of the budget, which may set out some plans on how to finance it down the road.

There have been several throne speeches since my arrival in 1993. We have had three in the last three years. The Liberals came to power in 1993 and the tag team of the Prime Minister and the former finance minister have made promises, but nothing new has been created. I want to examine some of those things to tell Canadians that we are on the same page on many of the issues that we were in 1993 when the current government came to power.

The number one thing to address is the idea of fixing the health care system, which again was in the throne speech. In 1993 it was the National Forum on Health. That was the big agenda to fix the health care system. Now we have the Romanow commission in 2002. What has actually happened in the past decade under the Liberal government?

*The Address*

A decline in our health care system with Canadians waiting longer and longer for service. The old Soviet Union had a universal system, but people had to wait five years or longer for service. What kind of a universal system is that? I suggest that ours is running in the same kind of category. It is slipping very badly.

Canadians are waiting longer and longer for service. Why is that? We have provincial governments using 50% of their budgets to pay for health care as the federal government pays less and less. A promise back in the early 1970s from the Liberal government of the day, when health care was put in, was that the federal government would not pay less than 50% of health care in Canada. Now it has slipped to an average of 14% and it still thinks it can dictate how health care operates in Canada and what the best solution is. There has to be a more innovative way to do that.

It is the same Liberal government that slashed over \$25 billion in transfers to the provinces in the last five years. It is finally getting up to about the same amount in social transfers that it had cut out in the current year, but there is that huge gap of \$25 billion that is missing out of the system that has cost the provinces dearly and cost the Canadian health care system.

What about the promise of building a world leading economy? We see that in the Speech from the Throne. "Seize the opportunity" are the buzz words again. That is what they were in 1993. I looked back at the red book and it was exactly the same slogan. Nothing much has changed and perhaps it is for a good reason, because nothing much has changed. If it has changed at all, it has changed for the worse.

Let us look at what has happened to Canada's standard of living under the Liberal administration of the past 10 years. There has been a 70% decline to that of our major competitor, our neighbour across the border, the United States. It is a 30-year decline and it has accelerated in the last 10 years under this administration. We are slipping badly. Our productivity has slipped from 2nd place in 1980 to 13th place. The United States still remains in first place. Why is that? It is government and government policies that have made the difference.

Canadian workers are not any less productive, but when government takes a bigger take out of society it has to show up some place. It shows up in a decline in direct foreign investment in Canada. We have had a 30-year decline in direct foreign investment as a percentage of investment by others around the world.

Our factories are hurt. They have trouble ordering machinery and equipment because people do not want to invest here. They do not see the right climate to get the kind of rate of return that they need.

Conversely, we have seen an increase in Canadians investing outside of our country as they seek opportunity for growth and a reasonable return on investment. A sea change has taken place. Canadian investment in other countries has now surpassed the amount of direct foreign investment by foreigners in Canada. That happened about four years ago and the gap is widening all the time.

What else have we seen? We have seen a continuation in the decline of the Canadian dollar as we become the discount wholesaler of the world. We are in the range of 62¢ or 63¢, but it has been a long-term decline. Some people say that is great for our exports. If it

is so great for our exports, why do we not make it 50¢? It does not make sense. We do not get the kind of investment we need.

• (1805)

We have seen an increase in our young professionals seeking better opportunities outside of Canada. Almost every family that I talk to has somebody who has decided to move to the United States, even a nephew of mine. They are looking for better opportunities. They do not take that choice lightly. They take it because they are driven to it. They have family and relatives at home. It makes it difficult to come back. When they make that choice, it is because things are not as good as they should be in Canada.

We have seen a decline in agriculturalists. Canadian farmers are left to fight international subsidies on their own. The United States and Europe are in this huge subsidy war, whereas Canada is recycling and regurgitating the same \$600 million from year to year, calling it new money, and our farmers are left stranded.

What about our taxes? They are some of the highest in the world. As a percentage our personal income taxes are the highest in the OECD. That is some kind of record to have.

I want to deal for a moment with our security. It has become a big issue in the last year, after the United States was hit by terrorists. Most important, we have seen a systematic gutting of our military and our military capability through cuts to their budgets by the government. There is no will on the side of the Liberal government to do anything to reinstate that. It was not even mentioned in the throne speech.

What about the throne speech 2002? It is no wonder people are so cynical when the tired, old Liberal government comes along with another 58 new or recycled promises. Out of the 58, half of them were recycled promises. There is no mention how the government intends to pay for all these new promises. Let us look at a few of them.

There is the implementation of the Kyoto accord. The cost varies. I have seen the government's own estimates saying it will cost Canadians \$20 billion. Manufacturers associations and a lot of industry are saying it is more like \$45 billion. The government's number for loss of jobs was 200,000 jobs a year. Industry people are saying 450,000 lost jobs. It is a huge problem and it has to be paid for somewhere along the way by Canadians. There is no reasonable plan put forward as to how the government will accomplish that and what it would do to the economy.

Another item is infrastructure for the cities. The programs we have seen in the past run about \$2 billion. It will not be any less than that. However, what about the move into interprovincial jurisdiction that we see by the federal government? If the federal government would back off on its spending and leave some tax room for the provinces they could resume their rightful role in infrastructure and dealing with the municipalities. The Constitution says that municipalities fall under the jurisdiction of the provinces. Therefore another move outside the government's area.

Health care is another issue. We do not know what the cost will be but we know what the government's record has been.

*The Address*

There are aboriginal programs. It has been roughly \$7 billion a year so far. The government will increase that spending. It is the one item that has gone up every budget since I have been here.

There is a proposal to increase the child tax benefit. It is already \$7 billion. It will go up to \$9 billion in the next two years. Where it goes from there I am not sure.

Let us look at the history of what the government would do in cutting programs to finance these promises, because they have to be financed somehow. If the past practice continues, spending will increase at a rapid pace.

The budget was balanced about five years ago no thanks to the Liberal government. Growth in the economy here and in the United States accomplished that as did the slash in transfers to the provinces, essentially balancing the books on the backs of the provinces. Since that time, spending by the Liberal government has been rising at over 5% a year in the past three years: 7% in 2000; 10% in 2001; and so far this year it is up 7%. Responsible spenders? I do not think so. It is over twice the target inflation rate set by the Bank of Canada.

Now the Prime Minister's swan song social agenda in Monday's throne speech. Is it responsible? I do not think it is responsible at all. Twice the rate that the bank has set out for inflationary spending. It is clear Canadians need to hang onto their wallets over the next couple of years. The Liberals are on another spending spree. It reminds me of what happened in the 1970s.

Canadians will be waiting. With over 100 Liberal MPs supporting the former finance minister, will he control the Prime Minister's spending initiatives or will he not? Do not bet on it. The member for LaSalle—Émard and the member for Saint-Maurice are cut from the same cloth. The last 10 years are living proof.

● (1810)

**Mr. David Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I asked a question similar to this earlier but because of time restraints I was not able to get an answer.

Farmers in western Canada face a tough situation. They got their crop off this fall or are in the middle of getting it off. Prices have gone up. American producers and some of the farm organizations have begun to launch another trade action against Canadian farmers.

We will see toward the end of this week a decision as to whether that trade action can go to the ITC or not. Within the next month the ITC will be able to make a decision as to whether to put tariffs and restrictions on Canadian wheat. Those restrictions could go up between 35% to 40% which would basically shut down any Canadian exports into the United States. We have also seen how the government was totally unprepared to deal with the softwood lumber issue.

Would my colleague have any advice for the government as it seems to be unprepared and unwilling to deal with this issue in terms of agriculture as well? It looks like we will have another trade failure on our hands. I would be interested to hear my colleague's position on that.

● (1815)

**Mr. Charlie Penson:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for that important question.

Farmers are struggling greatly. My view is that they have not had a lot of support from the government. This party believes that we need to have aggressive action on the trade front by going to the World Trade Organization and supporting initiatives that will bring down the subsidies, especially the export subsidies.

The Liberal government tends to go there with a position where it is speaking out of both sides of its mouth. It is difficult to ask for trade access for our products subsidy free and not subject to tariff when we are insisting on the same thing for products coming into Canada in areas of the agriculture sector ourselves.

In the meantime our party has put forward the idea that we should have a trade distortion package available to help our farmers through this difficult time until those reforms can be made. It has not been forthcoming from the government. It should be instated because Canadian farmers are good farmers and they can compete head to head based on production, but they certainly cannot compete with European and United States subsidies which has left Canadian farmers in a difficult position.

**Mr. Peter Stoffer (Sackville—Musquodoboit Valley—Eastern Shore, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I know the hon. member read the throne speech. On page 5, in the second paragraph it talks about the fact that the government will modify existing programs to ensure that Canadians can provide compassionate care for the gravely ill or dying child without putting their jobs or incomes at risk.

It basically means that if people care for an individual who is in a palliative care situation or in a severe rehabilitation situation that they would be able to leave their place of work and receive some form of income most likely through the employment insurance program to care for their loved one and give their dying relative a sense of dignity before they pass on. It is exactly the same type of language that we have in a private member's bill which we have introduced in the House now for the third time.

Does the hon. member and his party support this type of initiative to assist the thousands of family caregivers in the care of their loved ones?

**Mr. Charlie Penson:** Mr. Speaker, that is an important question. It ties into the whole question of what the government is doing with the disability tax credit and how it has narrowed the definition for people who are disabled to be able to have a tax credit and to recognize that there is a problem for them to earn a living. There is more than one way to do this. The member has identified one way through the EI program. I am not sure that is the best way.



*The Address*

It seems to me that we have a government that is beating the bush trying to get every cent it can from people, even if that means knocking the disability tax credit from under Canadians to raise money for the Prime Minister's legacy. This seems to be the program that it is intent on following, raising more and more money.

**Mr. Kevin Sorenson (Crowfoot, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise and participate in the reply to the throne speech.

The first speech that I gave in the House was in February 2001 in response to the throne speech at that time which followed the 2000 election. Since that time I have delivered many other speeches on a diverse number of issues. However I will always remember that first maiden speech, and it is a pleasure to stand again and respond to this Speech from the Throne.

Like so many speakers before me, I would like to comment on what can only be classified as misnomers within the throne speech, beginning with the line in the throne speech that says:

The government will continue to work with its allies to ensure the safety and security of Canadians.

This line is preceded by another line which makes mention of the events of September 11. One can only surmise then that the government is referring to Canada doing its part to assist the world with the war on terrorism. My question is: How can Canada be of any assistance or do its part on the war on terrorism when we do not have the resources, the capability or the political will that is required to sustain a battle of the magnitude needed to bring down individuals and regimes like Osama bin Laden, Saddam Hussein, Hezbollah, Hamas and the Tamil tigers?

Our security and intelligence agencies have been financially starved for so long that the RCMP and CSIS do not have the resources to investigate or apprehend criminals operating in this country let alone assist other nations in determining who may be operating abroad.

Long before the attack on America, the Canadian Alliance had been demanding that the Liberal government beef up resources with a significant cash infusion that would allow the RCMP and CSIS to train and hire the desperately needed officers and skilled analysts that CSIS in particular had asked for and who were out there to combat terrorism and organized crime. However those demands have never been met.

We also demanded that the government allow for the listing of terrorist groups. Although it finally did concede to this request, what it finally offered was much too little and much too late.

This past July, some seven months after Bill C-36 received royal assent, the Solicitor General provided a list of entities deemed illegal terrorist organizations. How many were on the list? The Americans and the British had over 50 on their lists. Canada came up with seven. It is absolutely unbelievable and appalling that it took the Liberal government that long to determine and make public the fact that groups like al-Qaeda were in fact terrorist organizations. There are dozens of terrorist organizations and groups knowingly operating around the world. It is an absolute disgrace that the government has seen fit to list seven of those groups pursuant to the Anti-terrorism Act.

Is the Tamil tigers of Sri Lanka who have perpetrated more suicide bombings than all other terrorist groups combined listed? No it is not. Are Hamas and Islamic Jihad that are responsible for the slaughter of hundreds in Israel listed? No they are not. What about Hezbollah whose deadly attacks include the 1983 murder of 241 United States marines in Beirut? Was it listed? No it was not.

On July 25, in regard to the Solicitor General's listed entities of terrorists the *National Post* wrote, "For refusing to declare that the slaughter of Israel's Jews and Sri Lanka's Buddhists is true terrorism, this federal government should hang its head in shame".

Because of this government's failure to effectively recognize and fight the evils of terrorism, the *Wall Street Journal* this week concluded that our Prime Minister was soft on terrorism and "he has a misplaced pity for terrorists".

The fact is this. The Liberal government has a misplaced pity for criminals in general and that is why it failed to tighten laws against possession of child pornography and establish the national sex offender registry which until today we have been left in limbo over.

● (1820)

In the throne speech the government promises to reform the Criminal Code, to increase penalties for abuse and neglect of children. This quite obviously is a misnomer given the justice minister's reluctance to pass an outright ban on child pornography altogether. The sexual exploitation of children is one of the most sadistic abuses of children and yet the government has failed to effectively put a stop to it. My response to that is, if the government cannot handle the job, then get out of the way and let someone in who can handle it.

There just is not enough time today to adequately address all the misnomers of the throne speech and attempt by the government to pave some type of direction. The direction that the government is going is sad and Canadians are disappointed with it.

However before closing I must point out what is by far the most controversial issue of concern to the people in my riding and to the people and the Province of Alberta, and that is the government's intention to ratify the Kyoto accord.

In mid-October I wrote the Alberta Premier Klein to encourage him to continue opposing Kyoto and to acknowledge his decisive victory at the 43rd annual premiers conference in receiving unanimous provincial support for a first ministers conference on the Kyoto accord. Mr. Klein has stood firm in his belief that there should not be a quick ratification of the accord as there must be further scientific review and research. More evidence needs to be put forward as to the effects of the Kyoto accord.

The Alberta premier has in the opinion of the Canadian Alliance spoken not only on behalf of Albertans but of all Canadians inasmuch as if our economy fails, which it inevitable will with the Kyoto accord, there will be a huge ripple effect that will be felt all across the country.

### *Government Orders*

I firmly believe, as do so many of my constituents, that the Kyoto timeline to cut emissions is too short. It will kill jobs, seriously weaken our economy and undermine our competitive advantage in relationship to our chief competitor in that industry, the United States.

As the government's resolve to ratify the accord is intensified, as demonstrated by the Speech from the Throne, our resolve to fight the ratification is increased because, while Alberta cannot afford to lose thousands of jobs and some \$8 billion in the economy or in investments, Canada cannot withstand such economic devastation. We fully support reducing greenhouse gases but we do not support the Kyoto accord.

When the throne speech was delivered, I sat and listened for other issues that would touch and speak to my constituency of Crowfoot. In the worst drought in 133 years on record, covering 80% of our province and much of Saskatchewan, I was waiting to hear what the government was willing to bring forward in regard to help for agriculture and to the agricultural sector. I waited and the Liberals did not respond to the concerns of agriculture. There was one short sentence that was the same old agricultural philosophy rehashed time after time leaving the farming sector with not much hope.

The government has no new plan. It is dependent on old 1993 promises of the red book that it still has not fulfilled. It is not looking forward to the future of the country; it is looking back. What the government is leaving is not much hope in the way of the future. It is a government that is dealing with agriculture that is much like the rabbit in the headlight syndrome, not knowing which way to turn.

When we talk about the concerns and frustrations in the agricultural sector, we do not have the strong representation of a cabinet minister around a cabinet table fighting for the concerns of agriculture out west. He is absent. He has no plan or action. The minister has no assistance, and it is leaving Alberta farmers with little or no hope.

I encourage the federal government to look much beyond the throne speech because it is too full of holes, to look beyond to issues and legislation that will help the economy, not push Alberta and the gas and oil industry back into the dark ages but bring it forward. The throne speech fails to do so.

• (1825)

**The Deputy Speaker:** It being 6:30 p.m., pursuant to order made on Wednesday, October 2, the House will now resume consideration of government business Motion No. 1.

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## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

### IRAQ

The House resumed from October 2 consideration of the motion.

**Mr. Jim Gouk (Kootenay—Boundary—Okanagan, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I thought that it might not be necessary for me to speak on the debate on Iraq. I thought everything would have been said long before it reached me, but I find in listening to some of the hon. members from across the way that there are things that need

to be said and things that need to be cleared up. Given the incredible diversion of opinion on this, I would like to have my opinion on record. It is an opinion I have come to after considerable reading of material and consideration of all the aspects of this.

In the course of debate one thing we have heard from the government side was a very ill-conceived comment from a now contrite, I hope, Liberal member of Parliament who used the comparison of George Bush to Adolf Hitler and suggested that what he proposed to do is no better than what Adolf Hitler did. I would like to use the Hitler analogy, because it is appropriate, not in the manner in which the hon. member used it, but certainly it is appropriate.

In World War II, after the concern about Nazi Germany and the movement for eventual world domination that it was embarking on, Canada went to war in support in support of its British allies. That is what a country does with its allies when they have a problem and need help.

When Canada went to war, the United States did not. The United States provided a lot of supplies. It provided a lot of equipment such as aircraft. In fact, a lot of airfields we use in the country today are a result of the aircraft flown from the point of manufacture in the United States into Canada to then be ferried over to Britain by Canadian airmen.

Notwithstanding what the hon. member across the way said in making that comparison, ironically the United States at that time was criticized for its delay in entering that war. Ultimately, the United States did enter the war. Had it not, Hitler very well may have prevailed in World War II, certainly with Europe and possibly with Britain. Had he prevailed there, the atomic bombs that were dropped later during the segment of World War II, when the United States was fighting with Japan, may well have been dropped, but not by the United States but rather by Germany on such targets as New York City, Washington, D.C. and perhaps even Ottawa and other Canadian cities.

The hon. member raised a point and got it completely wrong. Frankly, listening to some of the rhetoric that has come from the other side, I am not really totally surprised.

To determine the best course of action in Iraq, it is first necessary to review certain indisputable facts and I emphasize that word indisputable.

We know absolutely without dispute that Iraq at one point had both chemical and biological weapons and the capability of manufacturing them. Even the most avid opponent of any action against Iraq from the other side would have to admit that is an indisputable fact. Iraq had the weapons and the capability to make them.

We know for a fact that Saddam Hussein is willing to use such weapons given that he has already used them in the past against Iran and against his own people in northern Iraq. Therefore, neither is that fact in dispute.

We also know, again as an absolute indisputable fact, that he was in the process of building facilities to construct nuclear weapons at the time of the gulf war when Iraq invaded Kuwait. During the gulf war, the United Nations requirement for a ceasefire against Iraq was the elimination of all their weapons of mass destruction as well as the facilities that would provide him the ability to manufacture new ones and full and open unimpeded weapons and facility inspections.

• (1830)

I want to emphasize that it was a ceasefire. It was not the end of the gulf war; it was a ceasefire. That means the war never ended. The United Nations agreed with the coalition that there would be a ceasefire against Iraq in return for Iraq meeting certain conditions imposed by the United Nations. Although Iraq initially agreed to this condition, with extreme reluctance, it has since done everything possible to impede inspections, up to and including banning inspectors from the country.

For the reasons I have already outlined, it is imperative that full and unimpeded inspections be carried out. Hussein has blocked the re-implementation of UN inspections until very recently. It should be noted that the only reason he finally agreed, and I will stand behind this fact, was to prevent what appeared to be the impending action of the United States, an action generally supported by several other countries, including Iraq's own Saudi neighbours.

Now the question becomes, should these inspections be forced upon Iraq? The best answer comes from a representative of Saudi Arabia who urged Hussein to accept and allow the inspections. He advised that if Hussein had nothing to hide, he should allow the UN inspectors to come in and prove his compliance with the requirement to destroy all weapons of mass destruction and the ability to manufacture them. He pointed out that if the inspections were to take place and the UN resolution were complied with, it would set up a likelihood of removal of UN trade sanctions.

Many people in my riding have contacted me to say that they would like these sanctions lifted. They feel that the sanctions have caused great humanitarian harm to the people of Iraq. I do not doubt for a moment that they do, but we are in a Catch-22. If we allow open trade, Hussein will then use that as an opportunity to fund and construct new facilities for the manufacture of these weapons.

In the absence of Hussein's cooperation, it is not at all unreasonable to assume that he has something to hide. Otherwise, why not go along with what his own Saudi neighbours have suggested and prove to the world that he indeed does not have weapons of mass destruction or the capability of manufacturing them?

If this inspection is to be complete, it cannot be for just a few areas or areas accepted by Saddam Hussein and the Iraqi authorities. It has to be for all facilities and that includes the presidential palaces. Some people may have the idea that the presidential palaces are areas that contain very fancy homes or something similar to a castle in England and the grounds surrounding it. These are massive complexes on vast tracts of land. They are more than adequate for hiding not only the weapons themselves but even the facilities to build them. They have to be on the table as well.

### *Government Orders*

The final question deals with the U.S. request that the UN pass a resolution outlining specific consequences if Iraq does not live up to the latest agreement to allow weapons inspectors back in, with unimpeded access to all sites. I agree that this resolution has to be passed given Hussein's past record of broken promises, including 16 individual violations of United Nations resolutions.

A reasonable person will never go to war when it can be avoided. Likewise, a reasonable person should never turn his or her back when the safety of millions of people in a region is put at risk by a man who has in the past demonstrated both the will and capacity to use weapons of mass destruction. Neither should a reasonable country.

• (1835)

**Mr. John Bryden (Ancaster—Dundas—Flamborough—Aldershot, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am unusually qualified in one aspect, among members of Parliament in this chamber, to speak on this issue. I wrote a definitive book on the history of chemical and biological warfare in the late 1980s, which is still, I believe, highly regarded. It dealt with Canada's role in developing, basically, biological weapons. Anthrax, botulinus toxin and tularemia, these agents of biological warfare, were first invented here in Canada. Many of the methods of deploying them were first researched during the second world war here in Canada. Indeed, it is not well known among Canadians but anthrax mass production first began in the world at Grosse Ile, an island in the St. Lawrence, in 1943. Canada has long ago been very active in the field of developing weapons, particularly weapons pertaining to biological warfare, so in this debate I come with some knowledge.

I will begin by saying that I am pretty certain that we can trust the Americans to say that there is a genuine threat. I believe Mr. Bush when he says that Iraq possesses weapons that are near to deployment and are a danger. However, I have to question, in the context of my experience and my understanding of these weapons, because the principal use of these weapons has not changed in 50 years, how they are deployed, how they can be used, how effective they are. Whether it is poison gas or biological agents, nothing has really changed in how they can be employed.

One of the problems in the debate has been the use of the term weapons of mass destruction. Certainly an atomic bomb or a hydrogen bomb is a weapon of mass destruction, but chemical weapons and biological weapons are more correctly characterized as unconventional weapons. They have two basic uses. They can be used on a small-scale terrorist attack, the distribution of an infectious agent, for example, in some civilian populated target. Or, when properly loaded in some type of hardware, they can be used for much broader dispersal, say, over a city. The important thing to bear in mind is that whether it is chemical or biological, if it is going to be used as a weapon of mass attack, it has to have a lot of hardware associated with it in order to deliver it to its target.

*Government Orders*

When I hear Mr. Bush talk about the threat, I have had to ask myself in that context what kind of threat must it be, because the reality is that if it is a threat of terrorist attack of small quantities of an infectious agent or that kind of thing or the release of a vial of nerve gas in some civilian target in the United States, that threat has existed for the last 50 years. Indeed, since September 11 the public has been very aware of the threat. They have been conscious of it because the first time, to my knowledge, that anthrax has ever been used was post-September 11, although I note that it was used by a domestic American terrorist. I cannot understand the threat in that context because in fact even when one sends weapons inspectors into a country like Iraq one cannot possibly track down the small quantities of these agents that are so deadly and are so portable. I would suggest that there is probably just as much of this agent in unlawful hands in Pakistan as there is under the regime of Saddam Hussein. So what is the problem?

• (1840)

I can only conclude that what the Americans have noticed, are aware of, is that Iraq is developing hardware to deliver unconventional weaponry, unconventional arms, unconventional agents, to area targets. In other words, perhaps through espionage or satellite surveillance or one thing or another, the United States has become conscious of the fact that there is the production of missiles or some other means by which the Iraqis could deliver a biological or chemical agent to some area target.

I do not think that the threat can possibly be, at this stage, to the continental United States, except in the context of terrorism. As I said earlier, that terrorist context could apply to terrorists in Pakistan or in North Korea. It could be anywhere in the world, even in the United States. Attacking Iraq in order to stop this problem is not going to work.

Indeed, I would suggest that one of the reasons why there has not been a terrorist attack using a biological or chemical agent on civilian targets, particularly in the United States, is the fact that there would be moral outrage not only in all the world over such an attack but there would be moral outrage in whatever religious community is associated with the attack. If it were al-Qaeda, then I would suggest that all of Islam would be universal in its condemnation of such an attack. That is why I do not think that type of terrorist attack has either occurred or is likely to occur.

However, it does seem to me that given that situation there probably is the real threat that Saddam Hussein has developed the capability of using a biological agent or a chemical agent against Israel. I would suggest that what is unsaid in this debate and the debate we hear out of the United States is that the real fear is that the real target is Israel.

Indeed, during the gulf war and before I became a politician I was an expert commentator on television on the issue of what would happen if the Scud missiles that were landing in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv were charged with poison gas. I would explain to the best of my knowledge from reading the literature, most of it open literature I should say, on the probable effects. They are horrible. If one has a sufficient number of missiles, and not a lot are required, and particularly if biological agents are used, a lot of people can be killed.

I do not think Mr. Hussein has the capability of striking the United States, but he probably has the capability of striking Israel. I suggest it is this that prompts the United States to want to dismantle the arms that may be introduced in Iraq. I point out also that the weapons inspectors will never be able to determine or locate small quantities of agent. Enough botulinus toxin to kill all the people in Ottawa can be stored in a quart jar and enough infectious agent to kill a lot of people can be stored in a vessel the size of a thimble. So I do not think it is that. I think Mr. Bush feels that he has to disarm the weaponry that may be aimed at Israel. I think that is a laudable aim.

However, there is a problem: the suggestion that the United States might take this action unilaterally. My great fear is if it is done unilaterally without the sanction of the United Nations, which gives it a certain amount of moral authority, if the Americans were to actually do this, whatever their good intentions for Israel, to do it unilaterally would be seen as aggression throughout the Muslim world and much of the other world besides. What I fear is that it would give moral authority to the terrorists to retaliate with unconventional weapons, biological or chemical, on civilian targets elsewhere in the world.

I do not think we have a problem now. I do not think they would have the moral authority that they would even dare to do such a thing. However, if they felt bolstered by what they could say would be unwarranted, improper aggression, a crusade against Islam or anything like that, then they might be tempted to use the weapons in a terrorist context.

So whatever happens, I think it has to be done in the context of the United Nations.

• (1845)

I support my government entirely and I hope that the American government is listening, because I think our government is giving extremely good advice. It is a genuine threat that is occurring in Iraq. I think it is a threat against Israel, but we must not do anything that sets fire to the world, that unleashes the use of weapons that so far, with only very few instances, have not been seen in the world.

**Mr. Myron Thompson (Wild Rose, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, there are a couple of comments I would like to make that are troubling to me from what I heard from the gentleman.

He said he was not certain that they have the capability to attack the United States. Those were the words he used. Prior to September 11, I believe that everybody on this side of the world believed that no one had the capability of any kind of attack, but remember September 11. They thought it could not happen. The member said that they do not have the capability to attack the U.S. I am suggesting to him that we do not know that.

The member talked about other leaders or other countries that may have certain weapons of this nature. I wonder if he could name any leaders of any of these other countries. It was already illustrated in Iran that he will use this stuff to destroy. He used it on his own people and destroyed thousands and thousands of people. He cut off the heads of those who objected to him, displaying them in public as if to say "Do not dare speak out against me". He has even attacked members of his own family. Does the member not understand the seriousness and the threat of this individual?

*Government Orders*

Winston Churchill understood the threat of Adolf Hitler long before the people did. Winston Churchill was called a crazy man, yet he was right. I wonder if the member understands that when I travelled through parts of the western states and talked to a lot of Americans from all over that area, having come from there and knowing them very well, all they care about is making absolutely certain there is never another occurrence of that kind of attack or any other future attacks on innocent people in that country ever again.

It is not the Iraqi people they are displeased with; it is Saddam Hussein. He must be stopped. If a Security Council resolution is not accepted by Saddam Hussein, if the conditions are going to be laid out his way, whose side is he on, Iraq's or the coalition's?

• (1850)

**Mr. John Bryden:** Mr. Speaker, I could not have been very eloquent in my speech because just to clarify, I support acting on a UN resolution.

When I said that Iraq does not have the capability of delivering weapons of mass destruction to the continental United States, I made the point that not only Iraq but just about every terrorist organization in the world has the capability of delivering to the United States and to any major city in the world a biological or chemical terrorist attack. The point, the whole point of my speech, Mr. Speaker, is that the reason why these attacks have not occurred so far—and there are terrorists all around the world, not just Islamic terrorists—there have been other terrorist groups that have been caught by our own security services carrying this type of unconventional weapon, a biological weapon or a chemical weapon.

The problem is that if there is a unilateral attack on Iraq, what it will give is moral authority, moral legitimacy in the eyes of the fundamentalists, the crazy lunatics of one particular religion or another, to use these unconventional weapons. If we are going to try to disarm the capability of Saddam Hussein of attacking Israel with missiles charged with poison gas or biological agents, we must do it under the moral authority of the United Nations, otherwise it will be perceived as an act of aggression. If it is perceived as an act of aggression, Mr. Speaker, than what we do is exactly equivalent to what is happening in Israel now with the suicide bombings.

The more we attempt to argue our point by aggressive acts outside of the legal conventions that the world recognizes, the more we legitimize illegal or immoral responses. I cannot think of anything more immoral than a suicide attack involving young kids.

**Miss Deborah Grey (Edmonton North, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in the debate.

I will preface my remarks by saying that there are certainly many of us in the House who were here, you and I included, Mr. Speaker, in 1991 when the gulf war transpired. The member who just spoke said that in fact he was not here, but he was giving expert commentary on it. He said that he was unusually qualified to address this debate. That could be, I suppose. I do not know if any of us ever is unusually qualified to do anything actually, but I appreciate his interpretation and estimation of himself.

Nonetheless, Mr. Speaker, I think back to when you and I and several others were here when that war broke out in 1991. I remember the feeling, and I am sure you do too, Mr. Speaker, of

thinking we really were at war. It was a powerful, frightening, unnerving time for all of us for sure, but here we are this many years later.

I understand that war was to liberate Kuwait and the upshot of it possibly was to bring to its knees the tyranny in Iraq and the Saddam Hussein regime. I think about how many years have transpired since then.

Even though the member talked about how these weapons of mass destruction or unconventional weapons have been available for 50 years, there are all kinds of things that have been available for 50 years. We see how things have escalated in the world. We have seen how available things are with the computer age, with the advent of CNN.

Again I am reminded of September 11 where we watched everything live. We seem to watch everything live these days. I think that maybe escalates the emotion of it certainly, but it also escalates the thrill of those who use these kinds of tactics on their own people and on other countries as well.

To say there may be small amounts in a quart jar is one thing, but when he talked about the moral authority of the United Nations and the resolutions that it is coming forward with, I agree with him. There certainly should be moral authority on that.

If I had had a chance to ask the member about the number of UN resolutions that seem to be totally ignored by Hussein, we could list off a number of them. Many people have done that in the debate so far. It is one thing to say we are not sure it is a big deal. That is one end of the spectrum. Of course the other end is that we would all go hysterical and think that this is something we need to act on tomorrow afternoon. Somewhere in the middle probably lies the truth and somewhere in the middle lies reasonable concern and assumption.

As we look at that just in terms of an overview, we need to make sure that we are acting wisely, that we are acting responsibly and that we are acting consistently. I am sad to say that I think our Prime Minister has acted inconsistently in terms of comments that he made during the gulf war in 1991. That obviously causes some concern. However, with the things that have happened just even in the last few weeks, I am not sure anyone in the world, let alone George W. Bush, would understand just exactly what Canada's position is.

If we have a plan ahead of time and we follow it through wisely and consistently, it seems to me the world ought to know what it is. If we in Canada, regardless of our political stripe, went to coffee shops and talked to people, who vote for all political parties, we would find people who would support each of the parties. I do not know that any one of them would be able to say what is Canada's stand, those who voted Liberal, Alliance or any other party. I am not sure that any Canadian would be able to articulate what Canada's plan and stance is on this issue.

After listening to the debate carefully and looking at *Hansard* one would wonder on the government side what in the world it is in terms of the inflammatory remarks that have come forward, and I am not sure that people really would know or articulate the plan. I have watched this.

*Government Orders*

•(1855)

I have watched the Prime Minister for many years and I am not certain what the plan is over there either, and I spend a whole lot more time paying attention to this than many other people who are busy with their lives and raising kids, et cetera.

Of course we should take safety and appreciation for that umbrella group, but when so many of those UN resolutions have been violated, paid no attention to, ignored, it certainly does cause us some concern. The United States has accused Iraq of the following charges and I would invite anyone to say true or false to them.

Violating the UN Security Council resolutions by refusing to fully disclose its activities regarding the acquisitions. I think we would have to answer true to that. I think Iraq has violated those Security Council resolutions.

Refusing to cooperate with the UN special commission and allow full inspections of sites where materials related to such weapons programs may be held. Again, I would question the member. Even if it is a quart jar it could do a whole pile of damage. If a person were clean and innocent he would not care who came in. If people are not messing around on their income taxes, they should not care when the auditors show up at their door. They should just say, "Come on in, I am clean, I am innocent, I have a clean conscience. Come on in and check it out".

If Saddam Hussein sent that signal saying to come on over, I think people would breathe a whole lot more easily. Yet we see that there is that hesitation, that someone could come in and say "Sure you can look around, but only here". I think the answer is true for refusing to cooperate with the UN special commission.

Iraq supports international terrorist groups operating against the United States, Israel and western interests. I think there is some of that so I think the answer to that would have to be true as well.

When we see the UN resolutions and some of the things that Saddam Hussein and his regime are refusing to comply with, obviously we need to be concerned.

As I mentioned earlier about the frustration I had with some of the things that have gone forward in the debate here, it astounds me and has for a long time, for 30 years give or take of Liberal dominance in this country, or 100 years of Liberal dominance throughout the world, that people think it is perfectly safe to just tuck themselves into the government benches and then just bash the daylights out of the Americans. One only needs to study *Hansard*. Members should not take my word for it but should look at *Hansard* and see some of the unbelievable comments.

There are extremist, inflammatory comments about George Bush wanting to go to war immediately and that this is going to happen. That just raises the emotion and the lack of logic of this debate. So when government members are thinking it is just fine to poke a great big stick in the eye of our next door neighbours, who will we go to when we need help?

There is a lack of trust on both sides of the border due to softwood lumber, airline tariffs and the list could go on. Yet when we need them, the Americans are our big cousin. It is almost like the Prime Minister would have to go cap in hand to Washington and say,

"Never mind, we did not really mean all that", yet it is easy to turn around. We saw that in the last U.S. election where the nephew of the Prime Minister said, "Well, I do not know who I would vote for". It is not our responsibility to get into that whole area of bashing the Americans. It just amazes me when I think that this is acceptable behaviour for government members and in fact the Prime Minister himself. Study *Hansard*.

**An hon. member:** Don't cheapen the subject.

**Miss Deborah Grey:** Talk about cheapening the subject, how important it is to be able to say that our military knows exactly what it is that it needs to do. I stood on the street in Edmonton welcoming our troops home. What an unbelievable job they are doing.

They are hopelessly underfunded. They are hopelessly under-equipped. Then I see someone like the Minister of National Defence who said yesterday or the day before that everything is great, that we can send all kinds of people and troops over there. That is not true. Listen to the military experts.

A spokesman for the Department of National Defence said the anti-terrorism operation has cost \$191 million already. It is supposed to cost \$205 million for the current fiscal year.

•(1900)

We are not capable of putting troops on the ground over there. The government needs to have a plan. The Prime Minister talked about having the people and the plan. He has neither.

I wish to congratulate our military who has fulfilled the government's requests. However when I look ahead, the government needs to have a plan and the people in place to say what our commitments will be. It simply has not done that.

**Mr. John Bryden (Ancaster—Dundas—Flamborough—Aldershot, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, first, I think everyone who comes to the House is uniquely qualified in some way. That is what a democracy is all about.

Second, just a comment. The point that I would like the member opposite to consider is the fact that quantities of chemical or biological agents suitable for use by terrorists are so small that it will not be possible for the weapons inspectors to locate them. In other words, an attack on Iraq will not diminish the quantity or the opportunity of terrorists to respond with a chemical and biological agent.

My problem is, and I hope the member will respond to this, is that given that fact and given these quantities of terrorist agent are available in other countries other than Iraq, my worry is that a unilateral pre-emptive strike on Iraq will increase the probability that these weapons will be used in a terrorist context rather than diminish it.

That is what concerns me. I hope the member opposite can respond to that.

*Government Orders*

•(1905)

**Miss Deborah Grey:** Mr. Speaker, I am happy to respond to that. I understand that some of these are tiny amounts so I appreciate what the member says about that. I agree with him. We may never find them but again, if people have a clean conscience they will tell the inspectors to go anywhere they like. That would go a long way to make people feel better.

The Saddam Hussein regime is different than some of the other countries in the area. I think he understands that. Some of the things have been going on year after year. To say that other countries will step up and the amounts would increase rather than diminish, again that may be too, but that is a moot point and we have a particular problem on our hands with the Saddam Hussein regime.

I wish to mention the whole idea about the United Nations as he did. I understand that too, that it is important to have the umbrella group of countries with the United Nations. I do not dispute that at all. He talks about unilateral force of the United States and people have their hearts set on going to war and they are going to war no matter what.

I do not accept that thesis. He was beating his chest a while ago here, I am hoping he is feeling okay. It was self-inflicted. Nonetheless when I think about people who just toss this comment out, that it is unilateral and George Bush is going to war. Members get all hyped up about it. There is a growing coalition of nations that are concerned about this. He knows that just as well as I do.

If we look at countries such as Great Britain and Australia, these are not flakes. There is a growing coalition of responsible countries which are concerned. So again, members take a swipe at George W. Bush and say it is unilateral and the man is a warmonger. I do not think George Bush is perfect and I dare say he would not think the same about me. Nonetheless, we need to look at a coalition of reasonable, responsible people who are increasingly concerned about this and pay attention to that, not thumping one's chest.

**Mr. John Bryden:** Mr. Speaker, the member and I are actually on the same wave length on this. I will just point out that I said in my original speech that I believe that President Bush had reason to consider that there was a problem in Iraq and that it had to be addressed.

I only urge him, and I think the member would agree with this, that we need to try to do it under the umbrella of the United Nations because that is the moral authority that we need in a situation like that. Otherwise the danger is being seen as a wanton aggressor. I do not think that is the intention of the President of the United States. I think it is a perceptual danger. Canada and our Prime Minister have given President Bush very good advice.

**Miss Deborah Grey:** Mr. Speaker, I agree with that and I would be thrilled to have the member take that to his caucus and some of the ensuing speeches reflect that. I can only guess that he is having some difficulty with some of the things that he has read in *Hansard* because that is not the intention or the sense of emotion that has come out in this debate unfortunately for members on his side of the House.

**Mr. John Maloney (Erie—Lincoln, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to address the House and Canadians on the situation in Iraq, the conflicting positions of various nations of

the world, as well as my own feelings on our own country's position in response to this grave and serious question.

Canada has not only a responsibility but an obligation to join this world debate. We must speak calmly and independently on such matters as war, peace, and other impacts on the global community. We are neighbours and friends of the United States and friends with the United Kingdom as well, and as such we must, as good friends do, give our best advice even though it may not possibly be what they want to hear.

The United Nations was established following the second world war as a forum, as a tool in the new world order to deal with aggression within our globe. Admittedly, article 51 of the UN charter allows a country to defend itself from aggression, but does this concept include the possibility of a pre-emptive strike against a protagonist? After some deliberation I will respond in the cautious affirmative, but this position must be founded on irrefutable evidence and the highest possible justification.

Has this test been met in the current situation? Does Iraq have nuclear weapons? Is there evidence of an intent to use such against other nations? There is no confirmation in this regard. Is it justification for an attack? I would suggest it is not.

Can Saddam on the other hand be trusted? He reneged on his promise to let the UN destroy his weapons of mass destruction in exchange for a gulf war ceasefire. He has disregarded 16 United Nations Security Council resolutions. He claims that Iraq is weapon free, yet rejects unfettered inspection. What does he have to hide?

He has manufactured anthrax and gas, using such in a murderous incident against the Kurds as well as against Iran. He is a despot who has tortured and poisoned his own people and fired missiles on Israeli citizens. There are indeed some chemical and biological weapons unaccounted for after the gulf war. Hussein says that he is a threat to no one. I suggest Hussein is a potential threat to everyone. I for one have no trust in Saddam Hussein.

On the other hand I disagree with those American leaders who would espouse unilateral conflicts and pre-emptive strikes anywhere and anytime. I disagree with the premise that the United States can assume the role of judge, jury and executioner with impunity. This is against the rule of law. This is more than troubling; it is in fact terrifying.

I implore the Bush administration to consider the following before further consideration of a launch of what some would consider an unprovoked assault on a hostile regime. What will the perception and reaction be of the 150 million Muslims throughout the world to see western nations enforcing this will on a small but potentially lethal Muslim country? Will it inflame them, and if so, what consequences will follow? Will this hinder or detract from the war on terrorism? Will it give sympathy to the al-Qaeda? Will it isolate the moderates in the Middle and Far East nations and feed the extremists? Will it be a prolonged war? Will it destabilize other countries in the region and could this war spread to them as well? What would be the economic and social damage to this region?

*Government Orders*

These are questions that cannot be ignored, especially in light of a questionable, clear and imminent danger to the safety and security of the United States or other nations. If the weapons inspectors are given clear and unfettered access to Iraq, they will in fact confirm or refute this.

I would support the efforts of the United States and Britain that would obtain a strong and clear resolution from the Security Council of the United Nations to provide Iraq with a final opportunity to comply with the UN's inspections and very directly, the consequences in default of so doing. It is imperative that they do so. It is imperative that they must not act unilaterally. As our Minister of Foreign Affairs has stated:

We must not lose sight of the absolute need to make Saddam Hussein understand the choices he faces. He can comply and have Iraq's sovereignty and security assured by the community of nations. Or he can continue to flout his international legal obligations and face the inevitable consequence.

In default of compliance, a multilateral intervention against Iraq must be considered. Every effort must be made to explore all options to avoid the outbreak of hostilities, but there, nonetheless, must be resolve to act if necessary.

• (1910)

Interestingly, this week Iraq agreed to allow the quick return of United Nations weapons inspectors to that country. This had been suspended for four years. This is a positive step and a first step. It is not a final step. The flaw however is that it is based on the terms of a 1998 ruling that exempted from inspectors the so-called presidential palaces which represent an area of approximately 32 square kilometres containing roughly 1,500 buildings.

When we consider that devastating biological or chemical weapons can be produced in the space of a few large rooms, such exemptions cannot be entertained. The inspectors must be allowed into these compounds. Every nook and cranny must be examined and any weaponry discovered must be destroyed. Inspections must be unfettered and as some have said, there must be no wiggle room.

Let there be no mistake in the graveness of this situation and of joining in a possible conflict. Canadian participation in hostilities will not only put our well trained and courageous armed forces in peril in the theatre of war, but the general populace could be at risk as well. Retaliation against Canada and Canadians could be a real possibility.

We may no longer be able to watch falling Scud missiles on CNN from the safety and security of our living rooms without fear of direct risk in our towns and cities. The development and proliferation of weapons of biological and chemical warfare and the horrific reality of 9/11 only serve to emphasize the potential for Canadian soil to become a battleground as well. This is a sobering thought.

Canada has a long and proud history of peacekeeping. We are a nation that promotes dialogue and understanding, compromise and diplomacy. I make these remarks this evening in this vein. We hope, indeed we pray, that such efforts in the Iraq situation will avert military action and all that may follow from it.

If there is to be military action, let it be a United Nations action, but let all the world know that the United States is our friend and ally. I make these comments tonight in a constructive way to this

friend. Let all the world know that Canada will stand at home and abroad with all nations against terrorists and terrorism.

• (1915)

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Suzanne Tremblay (Rimouski—Neigette-et-la Mitis, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I am most pleased to be able to take part in this debate. Recently, one of the reasons that my constituents stop to talk to me, even while doing my groceries, has been to tell me “Mrs. Tremblay, we hope that you will not support a war, and that the government will not send our soldiers to Iraq, that the government of the member for Saint-Maurice will do everything within its power to prevent the president of the United States from declaring war”.

It is an issue that is worrying Canadians and Quebecers, because when you get right down to it, if we were to do a poll, we would see that a large segment of the population would ask us to do everything in our power to ensure, as much as possible, peace in the world.

In this day and age, we have every means at our disposal: well-developed diplomatic structures, means of communication, means to train humans to be more understanding of different cultures and religions, which makes up what we call our civilization. We have so many tools at our disposal now to be able to benefit more from what we are doing right now.

As we speak, the Security Council is probably still meeting. Today, we learned that the United States and Great Britain have utterly rejected the agreement reached between the UN and Iraq on the return of inspectors to that country. Washington asked the negotiator, Mr. Blix, to delay his departure for Iraq.

I am under the impression that the President of the United States is using every possible means to get what he has wanted since the beginning: to go to war. Every time an agreement is reached between Iraq and the UN, he will come up with an additional requirement.

The United States and Great Britain insist that the UN Security Council must adopt a much more strongly worded resolution than the first one before inspectors can travel to Iraq.

The United States has proposed a draft resolution. This draft resolution was submitted to the Security Council and it seems that it really lacks clarity. It provides, among other things:

That the inspectors will have to have access to presidential sites in Iraq.



*Government Orders*

At first glance, this requirement by the United States to have access to all sites, including presidential sites, does not appear to be too compelling for Iraq. As we know, the Americans have been asking for this from the beginning. The fact that they insist on having access to these sites does not appear, in and of itself, to be an unreasonable demand. However, this requirement was not part of the initial demand that led to the agreements reached in Vienna by the UN and Iraq. This would be a new demand and, if the Security Council agreed to it, negotiations would have to resume between the UN and Iraq. The UN representative would have to go back to Vienna and resume negotiating to try to get Iraq to agree to this new concession.

● (1920)

Another demand that appeared in the last resolution presented to the Security Council, the draft resolution presented by the United States, was for inspectors to be accompanied by American soldiers.

This demand by Mr. Bush is completely unacceptable. Unacceptable for Iraq, of course. It is well known that what brought an end to the work of the inspectors in Iraq was the espionage done for the CIA, which damaged the impartial reputation of the inspectors who were in Iraq. To again seek to put them under the control of American soldiers is to doom to failure any work the inspectors might do. I think that this would lack transparency and might plunge us back into the same situation as before, with the new inspectors again working for the CIA. They would be much busier with espionage than with the inspecting they are being asked to do.

The important thing is that inspectors maintain their autonomy, so that they can be under the aegis of the United Nations. They must not represent their country of origin, but be detached from it and put under the protection, as it were, of the United Nations. This seems to meet with the approval of all the various countries.

There is also talk of any failure on the part of Iraq to implement the agreement they have just agreed to and provide full cooperation constituting a new flagrant violation. Such a violation would authorize member states to take all necessary means to restore peace. This wording would help decide whether Iraq was cooperating to their satisfaction and would give carte blanche for an armed intervention, without again involving the UN.

This last point from what we know to be the draft resolution before the Security Council is completely unacceptable to us. This must not be based on a judgment call. My colleague, who spoke before me, stated it very well. We cannot allow the United States to be both judge and jury, responsible for deciding every aspect of everything in order to make it easy for itself to declare war. There must be an organization that is completely independent from the United States to decide if Saddam Hussein has truly violated the agreement, and if it should thrust us into a war that will end up being very long, apparently.

Therefore, the Security Council must be responsible for making this type of call, as to whether or not there really has been a flagrant violation. We know that Mr. Blix, who was the negotiator in Vienna, met with the Security Council today to inform members of the content of the agreement reached with Iraq. He met with them in person, and they discussed the agreement. Following the meeting, he said that he would now begin planning a trip to Iraq. Obviously,

however, he would be waiting for the Security Council to rule on whether or not he would be allowed to leave for Iraq.

We know that France, among others, has made a proposal that the Security Council is examining at the present time. We do not know what the details of it are, but we do know that it would do away with the systematic use of force. This is a bit of a guarantee for Canada, because the Prime Minister assures us that he will do nothing without the United Nations. I trust that our Prime Minister will stick to that position, because we have the assurance of France that it will defend its position before the Security Council. I believe that the nature of this stand is reassuring to Canadians.

● (1925)

[*English*]

**Ms. Libby Davies (Vancouver East, NDP):** Madam Speaker, first let me say that I am very glad to have the opportunity to participate in this important debate in Parliament. I think it is noteworthy that we are now in the third night of the debate. It shows that many members of the House from all sides wanted to be heard, wanted to be on record and wanted to participate in what is surely one of the most significant issues facing us over many years.

As I speak tonight and as other members of the NDP have spoken before me, I do so with a sense of grave danger and foreboding that unfortunately it appears that we are heading down a path where the U.S. political agenda is unfolding and determining a course that will cause the world to go into great conflict and will cause untold suffering, not only for innocent people in Iraq but also in a region that is already full of conflict.

I begin my remarks tonight with that great sense of foreboding. I was very heartened to see that last week there were more than 100 very prominent Canadians, including Margaret Atwood, Linda McQuaig, Senator Douglas Roche, Murray Dobbin, Judy Rebick and many others, who signed a statement calling on the Prime Minister to think very seriously about what course Canada takes. In that statement they said:

We, the undersigned, are deeply alarmed that the most powerful nations in the world continue to rely on military force to achieve their global political and economic goals—while eroding the standard of living, the environment, and the security of people throughout the world.

We are united in the belief that a military attack on Iraq at this juncture would be profoundly immoral, and would most certainly result in destabilizing repercussions that will endanger the whole world.

I would say that I wholeheartedly agree with that statement. In fact I was one of a number of members of Parliament who signed that statement.

I have also heard from many of my own constituents in East Vancouver, people who have taken the time to phone or e-mail me because they know that Parliament began its new session this week and because they knew that this would be the issue that we would be debating. They too wanted to express their incredible concern and reservation about what it is that Canada will do in terms of being complicit in a war plan against Iraq.

*Government Orders*

Like other members of our party, I want to be a voice in this Parliament. I hope there are more voices that will speak up for a global environment that respects peace and security, that respects international law and that respects the continuity of international law. I note that in a recent column written by Senator Roche he made this point very well, that the military and security document unveiled by President Bush just a couple of weeks ago is basically something that completely violates and flies in the face of the idea that international law, which has been built up so painstakingly over many decades through the United Nations and through the international community, is now poised to be completely dashed by this mad venture into a military conflict in the Middle East in Iraq.

I am very proud of the fact that the leader of the NDP, the member for Halifax, has from the very beginning unequivocally presented a position to the government and to the Canadian people that has advocated a position of respecting international law and not allowing ourselves to be dragged into some sort of mad race toward military conflict.

I was actually quite appalled when I heard the comments earlier of the Canadian Alliance member for Edmonton North when she took issue with other members of the House who somehow dared to be anti-American, as she said, to be inflammatory, because they suggested, and I would certainly add my voice, that Mr. Bush wants to go to war.

● (1930)

The truth be known, if we follow the events following September 11 in this exploding agenda of the war on terrorism, this is very much a part of Mr. Bush's domestic agenda which is to keep fueling the war he is waging. Now he has found a new target.

The member for Edmonton North questioned who we would go to when we needed help and suggested that because the Americans were our great ally that somehow we should fall in line and not dare to question. I say that the member for Edmonton North and other members of the Canadian Alliance who have voiced that kind of position are treading on very dangerous ground.

I believe the majority of Canadians fervently want the Canadian government and members of Parliament to stand up for a clear and unequivocal Canadian position that is not just some sort of blindly me too that is following President Bush.

One reason we need to do this is because, as the conflict now escalates and grows more complex, we can see that what takes place in this region is riddled with contradictions and double standards. We hear Mr. Bush on saying that somehow the existing UN resolution on the weapons inspectors is not good enough. The team was set to go, the terms had been met by Iraq and all of a sudden the goal posts changed again. Now it is back to the UN Security Council to try to convince it that it has to up the ante, change the goal posts and do it again.

If the issue of UN resolutions being ignored is such a pertinent issue, and I would agree that it is even though at this point Iraq has agreed to meet the conditions of the existing Security Council resolutions, why in other instances where UN resolutions have been flagrantly ignored is there silence on that question and no suggestion that we will be drawn into a conflict, for example, when it comes to

UN resolutions respecting the rights of the Palestinian people to exist in an independent entity, or resolutions dealing with the illegal and ongoing occupation by Israel of the occupied territories, or the ongoing intimidation taking place?

The question of having these double standards is something of which more and more people are becoming aware. Yes, there are serious questions about weapons of mass destruction that may be in Iraq and it is incredibly important that the inspection team have all the scope it requires to make those inspections. However the greatest stockpile of weapons of mass destruction lies to the south of us. There are 12,500 nuclear weapons are in Bangor, Washington just south of British Columbia where I live and in other parts of the United States.

In fact in 1998 I was part of a citizens' weapons inspection team that dared to try to gain entry to Bangor, Washington where the Trident submarines were. We wanted to do our own weapons inspection to point out that these weapons of mass destruction were located in the United States as well in other countries. Therefore, we are not just talking about Iraq.

Again, I come back to this point that when we are dealing with these very grave issues of biological weapons, or weapons of mass destruction or a regime that is repressing its people, it is very important to act within international law within the international community.

In closing, I am very proud of the fact that we in the NDP have stood tall on this issue. I know Liberal backbenchers have also spoken out loudly and clearly.

At the end of this debate, we have to have a hope that the Canadian government, the Prime Minister and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, will listen not only to the members of Parliament but to the Canadian people who do not want to see Canada become complicit in a terrible conflict in Iraq and in the Middle East that will cause untold suffering, never mind what has happened with the sanctions which have caused suffering and death of children and innocent people.

I hope this debate is for naught. I hope this debate is a message that the government will hear loud and clear. I hope the government will respect the wishes of the Canadian people and ensure that we respect and work within the international law and the international community.

● (1935)

**Mr. James Rajotte (Edmonton Southwest, Canadian Alliance):** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for her speech. I have a few comments and questions.

First, on the matter of the UN resolutions, she is correct in stating that there are some UN resolutions with which Israel has not complied. However we have to be fair on that matter by saying that the Palestinians have also not observed those resolutions to their full extent. She is right in saying that the UN should seek to enforce all the resolutions that have passed. That is one of the challenges the President made to the UN; that, as a world body, do not turn into a League of Nations, which has no enforceable authority, but seek to enforce the resolutions that it passes.

*Government Orders*

I am a little concerned about having the moral equivalent between the State of Israel, the United States democracy and the regime of Saddam Hussein. Could the member clarify that? She drew comparisons. Is she saying there is a moral equivalence between those types of regimes?

In terms of the inspection team, she mentioned that she wanted an inspection team with a fairly wide scope which we certainly support as well. However one argument that the United Kingdom, Prime Minister Blair and President Bush are making is that the current resolutions do not cover presidential palaces which in themselves are actually full compounds and that the new resolutions should certainly cover. Does she agree that there should be new resolutions to ensure that these so-called presidential palaces are covered?

**Ms. Libby Davies:** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to respond to the hon. member's comments and questions. First, it is important that UN resolutions be respected. As I pointed out, there are many that we could point to that have been completely violated and ignored in the Middle East over many years.

The issue though is on what basis will the resolutions be enforced. For us in the NDP, we believe strongly that the resolutions have to be enforced within the parameters of international law and within the UN. We are very opposed to the idea that President Bush has now set the stage or the agenda and moved the bar up. The goal posts continually change, almost on a daily basis, so that whatever is finally agreed will somehow no longer be good enough. That is something of which we should be incredibly suspicious and which we should speak against.

In terms of the situation in Israel, I have to ask the member if he considers it to be the act of a civilized democracy whereby a state would use its military apparatus to forcibly put people under occupation when that occupation is illegal? Is it the move of a civilized democracy when the state can use its apparatus to basically put a democratically elected leader under siege? I do not think so and we should be speaking out against that as well.

They are clearly different situations in Iraq and Israel. However the point I have made, which I think is relevant, is that it is hypocritical for the United States to focus on the one issue of what is going on in Iraq and somehow escalate this now to a war situation, while at the same time completely disregarding what has taken place in terms of an illegal occupation and a whole set of other people who have suffered as a result of that.

• (1940)

**Mr. James Rajotte (Edmonton Southwest, Canadian Alliance):** Madam Speaker, in response to the hon. member, we cannot get into the whole Middle East debate and we obviously should have a debate on that, but I do want to address specifically tonight the issue of the situation in Iraq.

I have attempted to follow as much of this debate as possible over the last two nights. There have been some legitimate concerns raised about the actions, the possible actions and the possible consequences as a result of any action against the regime of Saddam Hussein. Tonight I will attempt to deal with some of those concerns.

The first legitimate concern which has been raised is whether an attack on Iraq will create a worse situation than there is right now in

Iraq itself and in the region as a whole. This is obviously a legitimate concern. The Middle East as a whole is not a stable region. Israel and Palestine were mentioned, obviously Afghanistan as well. Saudi Arabia is another regime that has been mentioned that is not completely stable.

An attack on Iraq certainly could destabilize the region further and we have to recognize that possibility. However there are two points I would make to address this concern.

First, the threat of Saddam Hussein obviously has to prove to be more dangerous than the possible negative consequences to justify any action, including military, against him.

Second, the nations that may launch an attack against his regime must be prepared to help rebuild Iraq's infrastructure and work with the Iraqi people to ensure societal and institutional stability. This is absolutely crucial to achieve long term peace and we must hold our allies to this responsibility.

We in Canada should also shoulder our burden as a nation and be prepared to assist where we can. Canada is quite well suited to assist in this type of endeavour. With our forces so stretched in terms of any possible military action, it is unlikely we would take part. In terms of any post attack situation, we certainly could play a very relevant role.

The second concern I heard raised was whether an attack on Iraq would distract from the war on terrorism and the rebuilding of Afghanistan and whether it would cause even more terrorist attacks such as the one on September 11. This is obviously a very serious concern as well.

There is much work to be done in completing the war on terrorism such as the search for Osama bin Laden and other al-Qaeda operatives. There is also a tremendous amount of effort that must be expended in rebuilding Afghanistan. It is not an oil rich country like others in the region and it needs what could be compared to a Marshall plan to help rebuild its economy.

We also need to build a regime in which the Afghani people can expect to better their lives. We do not know whether there are any people like Konrad Adenauer in Afghan or in Iraq who can shoulder this responsibility as that individual did in Germany post-World War II, which is why we should be prepared to assist in that endeavour.

Obviously any military action would put a strain on the resources particularly of the United Kingdom and the United States, but it is one that both leaders of those nations have said they are willing to bear.

In terms of the issue of more terrorist attacks, that is a serious concern as well. The fact is that we must make an intelligent guess on that. World leaders must ask if Saddam Hussein will make an attack if they do not make a pre-emptive strike against him. That must be the position if we are to have any sort of military action against a country.

*Government Orders*

That leads me into the next concern, which is whether there is justification for a pre-emptive strike on Iraq. Obviously we would like to deal with this through the United Nations, and the right to take pre-emptive military action must be narrow and well justified. It should require a high level of evidence that a rogue state, which has demonstrated a willingness to use weapons of mass destruction, is on the verge of developing them. Iraq certainly qualifies as a rogue state and it has used weapons of mass destruction in the past against two of its neighbours and certainly against its own people, the Kurds.

The question is what Iraq's capability is now. The Prime Minister of England has produced a document to substantiate many concerns. CSIS in our country and President Bush have produced some. The problem with assessing the evidence that might establish the justification for a pre-emptive attack against Iraq is that by its nature the best evidence is likely to be classified. It will generally come from spy satellites and from any spies on the ground.

● (1945)

An administration trying to garner support for an invasion will have to strike a balance between protecting its intelligence sources and making its case to the public. This makes it difficult for informed citizens and parliamentarians to decide how strong a case for pre-emptive action actually is without knowing everything that the U.S. administration knows. Unfortunately that is virtually impossible.

We are being told that Iraq is buying thousands of specially designed aluminum tubes capable of being used as components of centrifuges to enrich uranium. It is developing a capacity to use drone aircraft to spray chemical and biological agents. It is expanding its efforts to enlist terrorists and carriers of weapons of mass destruction.

From these facts we can discern three conclusions. First, Iraq is determined to develop nuclear weapons and the capacity to deliver them; second, Iraq may not yet have that capacity; and thirdly, and perhaps the most crucial conclusion, how much time do we have before these nuclear weapons become operational and is it enough to warrant further efforts short of attacks, such as UN weapons inspection?

We have supported those intermediary steps to this point. We have applauded the President of the United States for going to the UN and seeking resolutions through the UN Security Council. That is what we think should be done. The U.S. always acts best when it acts as part of a multilateral force and we support those efforts.

The Bush administration has argued that if the UN does not act tough enough, or if Iraq does not comply with the sanctions, then it will certainly act. This means that the stakes are high and the facts are uncertain. In the age of conventional warfare, the presumption might well favour waiting and we would prefer to wait. But after September 11, and if waiting realistically increases the risk that we or our allies may be exposed to nuclear, biological or chemical attack by Iraq or Iraqi-sponsored terrorists, then the presumption may well favour immediate preventive action, especially if it can be taken so as to minimize civilian casualties.

Whatever course we pursue we may turn out to be wrong. The real question for us as parliamentarians is: would it be worse to err on the

side of action that turns out to be unnecessary, or of inaction that exposes us to preventable devastation?

The fourth issue related to this is asks whether the U.S. or its allies, including the United Kingdom, have a right to try to effect regime change in another country? That is regime change as opposed to just trying to deter Saddam from amassing and deploying weapons of mass destruction. Obviously it would be better, everyone agrees, if we assume that Saddam Hussein could simply be deterred, if he could be convinced through a forceful resolution and enforcement by the United Nations to end his program of developing weapons of mass destruction.

We favour the UN Security Council passing a strong resolution to send in its weapons inspectors and have them, first, determine the extent of Saddam's weapons programs, and second, dismantle those programs. If this is not accomplished, and if Saddam continues to delay and deny, then there will need to be a stronger response from the United Nations. If the UN fails to act, then the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia and others will act. They have said so. If those conditions all occur, then Canada should support these allies in that situation.

There must be consequences to the fact of Saddam not obeying UN resolutions or the UN not following through on its own resolutions. We in the official opposition hope that conflict and the loss of human life can be avoided, but we must also be prepared to support our allies, the U.S., the U.K., Australia and others, in sending a clear signal to Saddam Hussein that we will not stand by while he develops weapons of mass destruction. He must hear this signal loud and clear and, in order for him to understand it, it must be clear that we are prepared to use force if necessary.

One indubitable truth from human history is that the imperialistic tendencies of tyrants must be met by strength and resistance. Otherwise they will expand and they will use weapons of terror. That is evident throughout human history.

The world really changed after September 11 and we must recognize the uniqueness of that terrorist attack. It was even different from other terrorist attacks. It was not a group of terrorists taking a plane of hostages and saying to do this or else they will not release the hostages. It was a pre-emptive terrorist attack in which the people in those buildings and the leaders of that nation had no opportunity to do anything to prevent that attack.

● (1950)

That must be repeated and understood over and over. It was a unique terrorist attack because it was pre-emptive. There was no opportunity for the U.S. to respond in any way before it had its symbol of industrial strength, the World Trade Center, and its symbol of military power, the Pentagon, attacked. A third plane was headed for either the White House or Congress. Those pre-emptive strikes must be considered acts of war. They have changed the whole nature of human history. We must realize that we are in a post-September 11 world. Nobody wants war. No one wants the destruction of human life, and I think that is clear.

*Government Orders*

I happened to be in Washington on September 11, 2002, and there was a strong debate going on. The national security advisor was on the radio and Americans were phoning in debating and deliberating both sides of the Iraq issue. They wanted to know whether they should send their sons and daughters off to war.

Some of the comments from the other side of this House about American society were disappointing. It is a fruitful democracy in which this kind of debate and deliberation takes place. We must recognize that the character of that democracy as well as the character of other democracies is completely inequivalent to the character of the regime under Saddam Hussein. Some of the moral equivalents between regimes of that type cannot be repeated. We must make a clear distinction of kind between those two.

Canada must stand with its allies in ensuring that Saddam Hussein understands that failure to comply to complete and total access by UN weapon inspectors will have—

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos):** I am sorry to interrupt the hon. member. I know 10 minutes goes by very fast.

**Hon. David Kilgour (Secretary of State (Asia-Pacific), Lib.):** Madam Speaker, would my hon. colleague from Edmonton Southwest give us the benefit of his views on the problems that might result in Iraq among peoples of different branches of the Muslim faith like the Kurds, for example? I do not think he mentioned any of those problems when he was giving his speech.

**Mr. James Rajotte:** Madam Speaker, certainly any military action against Iraq will create tensions in the region and could create tensions within the various factions of the Muslim faith.

In the past Saddam Hussein has used horrific chemical weapons against the Kurds. It is rather ironic that Saddam Hussein says he is heir to Saladin, the great Muslim figure of the third crusade who in fact was a Kurd. In this century Hussein is using him against the people he is purporting to be a descendant from.

It is true that Saddam Hussein holds the support of many Sunni Muslims in Iraq and that would create some friction within that community. There is the long-standing historical friction between the Persian community in Iran and the Shiite Muslims and the Sunni Muslims. Those frictions exist now. Will those frictions become worse with an attack on Iraq? Possibly.

It could possibly destabilize other regimes. We must be prepared for those consequences. That is why we must ensure that it is more dangerous not to have an attack and ensure that we are justified if an attack takes place. We must also ensure that after an attack if it so happens that we are prepared with our allies to shoulder our burden to ensure some sort of societal and institutional stability in that region.

**Mr. Dick Proctor (Palliser, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I too listened intently to the member's remarks in which he expressed the wish that if there is to be a regime change brought about by the United States and the United Kingdom that those countries would stick around to do the clean up and put the country on a better path in the future. Those are good words.

Since the Marshall plan that he alluded to, has there been a time over the past 50 years when the United States intervened in other countries and stayed behind to clean up the rubble following its

military intervention? Can the member tell us one occasion when it did that? Is it not more accurate to say that it has simply moved on to what it considers to be the next area that needs to have a regime change?

• (1955)

**Mr. James Rajotte:** Mr. Speaker, there has been nothing of the sort, or nothing of the size or magnitude of the Marshall plan, since that time. That was probably unique in history. It is not an excuse for not going into Iraq. It is a reason to be concerned about an attack on Iraq because one of the real consequences is that we will have a destabilized region there.

I do share some of the concern of the hon. member. A lot of our foreign policies, and foreign policies of most nations today, are too short-sighted and tend to be focused on where CNN is pointing at that moment, whether it is Somalia, Rwanda or wherever. The U.S., in certain regions, now in South Korea with its trading with Taiwan, has attempted to, at least through trade and diplomatic initiatives, ensure that those regions remain stable democracies. I think those are two examples.

It is incumbent upon us as allies to ask the United States to ensure that it does stay in the region and that if it is going to take an action such as this that it does have a plan for ensuring societal and institutional stability afterwards. Otherwise it will create a situation similar to the one with the Shah of Iran where it was worse than it was in the first place.

**Mr. Alan Tonks (York South—Weston, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I am privileged to follow the member for Edmonton Southwest. I would like to congratulate him on a very sensitive and wise analysis of the situation that is before us tonight.

I would like to add one additional point that has been indirectly referred to. The notion that there could be a nuclear capability in Iraq is probably the single most important facet of this whole notion of the world being terrorized in an unconventional sense.

It seems to be that the traditional power that is associated with diplomacy is where nations of good faith have sat down together and discussed the terms and conditions that would bring them to a peace that would be in their nation's interest and in the interest of the nations of the world.

This is skewed in very profound ways. If a leader of the nature of Saddam Hussein were to have a nuclear capability, it would be destabilizing to the point where there would be no balance in the area, but it would be the utilization of terror and international terrorism. Just the threat that he would have that capacity would change the whole way and manner that we sit down and negotiate differences. To think that possibility could be in the hands of a Saddam Hussein is, I believe, what drives the United States to the degree of concern that it has, that the world could be held hostage by a single nation unlike any other nation in the recent past.

*Government Orders*

The Indian-Pakistani situation over Kashmir has brought saner minds to bear on the situation. The notion of the level of annihilation that would be invoked on each of those nations has brought them to the point where they have backed away with the support of the international community. However that would not be the case if Iraq were to acquire, indeed if it has not already, that nuclear capability. It would destabilize the area. We simply must bring every manner of intervention that we have to bear on that possibility.

Traditionally we have done that through the United Nations, through article 24, which was given the responsibility for the maintenance of peace and security, and is defined in terms of collective responsibility which was discharged to the authority of the Security Council. This is what gives a decision to use force its legitimacy. When we decided, incidentally, to use that force against Iraqi aggression in 1991, the international community, through the Security Council, was the legitimization for that action.

The substance of the role that we have played so far has been to bring a multilateral solution, through the United Nations, to bear on the situation with respect to Iraq. I believe, having listened to the three evening debates, that still is the correct course.

● (2000)

I can only add one constructive piece of advise as a result of everything that has been said. Inflicting harm on innocent Iraqi people has to be considered. As it has been suggested, there will be a huge rebuilding program, and still remains without a war, required in Iraq as it is in Afghanistan. If we wish to replace the terrorization by the administration of Saddam Hussein with a regime that is guided by human rights, natural justice and rule of law, then we have a huge job to do.

What has happened to the innocent Iraqi citizens is a result of the refusal of the regime that terrorizes Iraq to allow food in and by it not coming to agreement with the resolutions that would open the door to the kind of aid that would go into Iraq to start to rebuild and work toward these democratic institutions. None of these things can happen until there is an agreement that opens the doors to the inspections that were called for under earlier Security Council resolutions of the United Nations.

My take on the situation is that we must support the United States in gaining unequivocal access to inspections within Iraq. We should advise that there is the capacity to be very selective should there be any compromising on the part of Iraq with respect to allowing those sites to be inspected. If they do not allow the inspections then the full military might of a multilateral force would be brought to bear on those sites. That would be a judicious use of the absolute capability, which is undeniable, of not only the United States but the free nations of the world that would join it.

I say that just as one additional approach to preciseness because it seems to me that people are alarmed at the ad hoc nature of intelligence gathering and what it tells us we should do or where we are with respect to Saddam Hussein. However, the one thing that is quite clear in everyone's mind is that his regime must not be allowed to advance any further in terms of biological weapons and weapons of mass destruction and the ability for him to change the conventional negotiations that we have enjoyed through the United Nations and through responsible state to state agreements.

It is with respect to being more precise, in the spirit that the previous speaker has spoken so eloquently, that if I were advising the President of the United States—and we did have a similar debate earlier if the House recalls when we were advising our Prime Minister what to tell the president when he was going to see him just prior to the Afghanistan initiative—I would, with great humility, tell him to be very precise, at least at the beginning, with the wording of the Security Council resolution, that we would support the United States in gaining that preciseness, and that, in terms of military operations, we should be very tactically correct and exact in order not to further harm the innocent Iraqi civilian population and lose the credibility of the international community. When we take action and we take it together, we take it with the strength of our convictions, our commitment to democracy and the values of our countries to allow the Iraqi people the freedom that would make them a part of the family of nations.

● (2005)

However, in order to do that we must be very careful in carrying out the mission that we have in terms of the international community and our leadership within it.

**Mr. Peter Stoffer (Sackville—Musquodoboit Valley—Eastern Shore, NDP):** Madam Speaker, one of the things that makes me a bit nervous is when he talks about us focusing our cooperative efforts with the Americans in order to have Saddam Hussein comply with any possible UN resolutions that may come down the pipe.

My concern is the possibility or the perception that one nation or a couple of nations may act unilaterally in a particular theatre of the world in order to achieve an end goal. My approach and that of my party has always been that any action or any resolution must come fully from within the United Nations itself. If the United Nations decides on a plan of action, then that is the direction I believe it should go without any possible perceptions of coercion or whatever.

History is littered with rogue nations that had thugs as leaders: Mouammar al-Khadafi of Libya, Idi Amin of Uganda and Pol Pot of Cambodia. The world is littered with some pretty bad people who have done some rotten things to their own people. We, as an international community, are very hesitant to go into those areas to protect the citizens of those countries.

My question to the hon. member is, would it not be better to work through the United Nations on a more multilateral approach to this very serious problem in the Middle East? If we act unilaterally with only a couple of nations, we could be opening a door that we may never be able to close.

● (2010)

**Mr. Alan Tonks:** Madam Speaker, it is my contention that the United Nations, through the Security Council, is absolutely central to finding a diplomatic resolution to the present impasse.

At this point I think it is absolutely clear that Iraq must not, in the interests of maintaining that international solidarity through the United Nations and respect for it, be able to continue to defy the Security Council and the United Nations as it does right now, never mind a future resolution.

I hope the member understands that my emphasis at this point is to continue to focus our actions through the UN.

*Government Orders*

**Mr. Andrew Telegdi (Kitchener—Waterloo, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, what has been bothering me as we have gone through the debate has been that things are changing very rapidly. At one point we had Iraq agreeing to allow inspectors and to abide by the existing resolution and then all of a sudden the goalposts were moved. We did not think the resolutions were tough enough and we needed to make them tougher.

The suggestion has been made by respectable political figures in the United States that this is becoming very much a domestic election issue south of the border. I cannot help but start believing them. It seems to me that if the test is to go after those who defy UN resolutions, there are other countries besides Iraq that are defying them and we are not acting on it. If the test is to go after countries that have weapons of mass destruction, there are lots of other countries with a lot more weapons of mass destruction than Iraq.

I wonder what happened to public enemy number one, Osama bin Laden, who was wanted dead or alive. We have not heard his name mentioned lately. The new poster boy is Saddam Hussein. As brutal a person and dictator that he is, there are many dictators who fit the same mould.

My concern, and what concerns me more and more, is the way the United Nations is being bullied by the President of the United States. We have to be careful as Canadians of the integrity of a decision by the United Nations and ultimately the approval of the Security Council, and that it is done as the will of the UN and the Security Council and not because they were bullied into it.

We know right now that there will be elections in two more years. I am sure there will be another poster boy who we will have to get rid of. That is my concern. That is why I think the integrity of the UN is so important and that it should not be bullied.

**Mr. Alan Tonks:** Madam Speaker, there are many messages that have come out. The major one is that there may be, in the near future, weapons of mass destruction. I would suggest that in the short term, regardless of the speculation vis-à-vis the internal situation in the United States, annihilating those suspicious sites would be a major message that all the people in the United States, in fact in the free world, would support fully.

**Ms. Val Meredith (South Surrey—White Rock—Langley, Canadian Alliance):** Madam Speaker, I felt compelled to take part in this debate on the Iraq situation. Over the last couple of weeks I have gone from one side of the equation to the other in dealing with the concerns. I appreciate some of the concerns that have been expressed, some of the historical sequences that have happened, some of the things that countries have done that perhaps they should not have done, but I think we have to look at where we are. We have to look at where the United States is right now and, whether we like it or not, September 11, 2001, changed the way we all look at things. The United States is now holding hearings in its Congress over the information the intelligence communities had. Had they put it together, had they shared the information, had they done something about it, they could have prevented what happened on September 11.

We are dealing with a nation that is having to look at information and how it deals with the information it has. Even on the other side, where people have a concern with the direction that the United States is going in or appears to be going in, they admit that the foe is a

mighty foe, that Saddam Hussein is a horrible person who has shown absolutely no kind of moral climate, either in his own country or in his dealings with other countries, that he used biological weapons of destruction against the Kurds, and that he used the same against the Iranian soldiers in the Iran-Iraq war. He has a history of using weapons of mass destruction. He has a history of not being concerned about his people. There has been more concern shown for the people of Iraq from the members of the House, this Chamber, than their own leader has shown.

There is also a concern about changing the conditions of the UN resolutions. There is a reason for wanting to change the conditions. There are 17 resolutions out of the United Nations and they compromise themselves by saying that presidential palaces are excluded. There is a concern, and there should be, about them being excluded. These are not residential palaces like Buckingham Palace. It is not our terminology that they use. These palaces are huge, massive compounds. It has been brought to my attention that there are 8 of them, that there are over 1,000 buildings, some of them large warehouse buildings, and that one of these palaces covers 44,000 acres, which is larger than Washington, D.C. There are an awful lot of things that can be stored, developed and hidden in an area of 44,000 acres, in something the size of Washington, D.C. It would be very naive for anybody to expect that this kind of area would not be part of the allowable inspection.

Tonight and in other debates I also heard concern that the United States is setting Canada's foreign policy, that Canadians are being sucked into having to follow the United States and its foreign policy. I would suggest that people should be equally as concerned if we were to let the United Nations set our foreign policy, if we expect the United Nations to set Canada's foreign policy. I think Canadians expect the Canadian government, the House of Commons and the Canadian Parliament to set Canada's foreign policy, keeping in mind what is in the best interests of Canada.

I think that what has to be and has been brought up in the debate is the role of the United Nations. It was established precisely to deal with conflicts between countries, hopefully to bring the collective will, thought or pressure of the world communities into peacefully settling these conflicts between nations rather than having nations unilaterally taking military action.

● (2015)

As a Canadian, I am pleased to see that the United States has gone that route. The United States has not at this point unilaterally gone to war against Iraq. The United States is willing to recognize the role of the United Nations, albeit it has run into problems enforcing the 17 resolutions currently on the table. The United States has said to the United Nations "Let us try to get a tougher resolution and then let us go to bat to support it". That is a critical point. It is not good enough for the United Nations to pass resolutions and look like it is doing something. It has to be seen by the world community as doing something. It has to be seen that when it makes a decision, when it makes and passes a resolution, it has the will and the might to enforce it. If all the UN does is put a piece of paper on the table and is not prepared to enforce it, then it is just a paper tiger.

*Government Orders*

I think the United States is correct when it says to the United Nations that it is willing to recognize the UN's authority or place in this debate, that it is willing to recognize the world community in dealing with this issue, but that in the end game, if it can be shown that the United Nations is not prepared to act on it, then the United States will have to act on its own or with its allies.

The best way to describe Canada's situation is that Canadians need to be convinced by the United States, Great Britain, Australia and those that have gathered as part of the growing allies of the United States that there is justification, that it would be a just action for us to join them. The best way to describe where we are is to borrow the phrase of former American supreme court justice Oliver Wendell Holmes: There must be "a clear and present danger" to justify this pre-emptive strike. Canadians have to be shown that there is a clear and present danger to us and to the western democracies.

It is important that we go through this process of having the United Nations look at a new resolution to make sure that all areas are part of the inspection. In the event that the United Nations does not come up with a new resolution, in the event that the United Nations is not prepared to support the resolutions already on the table, and if Canadians feel it has been shown that there is a clear and present danger of biological, chemical or nuclear warfare being used against the United States, against us, or against the free world, then we are obliged to be part of the effort to make sure that does not happen.

I think that is what Canadians have to deal with: the decision may come down to the fact that we have to take part in the American-led allied team action against Iraq. That leads us to a concern a lot of Canadians have, and that is the sorry state of our military. Here we are, once again being asked to put our military into harm's way. It is a disgrace that the government has allowed our military to get into the state that it is in. The military lack the equipment, the personnel and the funding to properly equip themselves and to be in a ready state to assist in any kind of armed conflict in which they may be asked to participate. It is interesting that it was the Liberal chair of the Standing Committee on National Defence and Veterans Affairs who stated last spring that our foreign policy is this: writing cheques that our military cannot cash. That is a very interesting statement coming as it does from a Liberal committee chair.

● (2020)

It reflects how all Canadians see the situation our government constantly puts our military in. I think that Canadians feel, regardless of what happens with Iraq and whether we end up in a military conflict with the allied forces in Iraq, that the government must pay more attention to and give more resources to our military so that when they are called upon to act on behalf of Canada or the world community they are in a position to do so.

I look forward to the end of this debate and hope the end result is that there are satisfactory resolutions coming out of the United Nations, and I hope that the United Nations will show the strength and the will to support those actions and support what has to happen to make sure that Saddam Hussein is no longer a threat to the world community.

● (2025)

**Mr. Peter Stoffer (Sackville—Musquodoboit Valley—Eastern Shore, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I have a quick question for my colleague from British Columbia. One of the reasons we have the United Nations is so that one nation cannot act unilaterally against other nations. That is the reason why the United Nations was developed well over 50 years ago.

I would assume that the member has been talking with her constituents and others across the country as well. Would she not agree regarding the fact that most Canadians I have spoken to and most of the ones we have spoken to at length really are hoping that any action, any resolutions or anything, must come from the world community through the UN?

I know that some folks here have criticized us for going after President Bush in that regard, but bear in mind that if we disagree with a particular policy of the President of the United States it does not make us anti-American. We know that the Americans are our best friends and our best trading partners, and we will be allies for a long, long time. Sometimes we do question some of their policies, both historically and the current one as well.

This is why the NDP in particular, and others in the House as well from all other parties, encourages whatever action required to deal with Saddam Hussein to come from the United Nations, because it will not just be Saddam Hussein. What is next after that? What precedent will it set? We believe seriously that action must come from a directive of the United Nations, completely and wholly. Would the member not agree with that?

**Ms. Val Meredith:** Madam Speaker, I would agree that Canadians are hopeful that the United Nations will take a stand and be very strong in the position that it takes with Iraq. Canadians generally are very hopeful that the United States will give the United Nations an opportunity to go as far as it will. But I think Canadians are also very aware that the United Nations has failed the world community in the past as well, that the United Nations in many instances has failed to act when it should have. If the hon. member would look at Kosovo, it was not the United Nations that stepped in, it was NATO.

So I think that there is also a history showing that the United Nations has been slow to act or has not acted at all. Canadians recognize that and are hopeful that the United Nations will show some teeth in this action it has to take.

**Mr. Mark Assad (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, many of my colleagues on this side, and colleagues from the Bloc Québécois, the NDP, and the member from Edmonton, have spoken out quite courageously against Canada's involvement in a unilateral military strike against Iraq. Such action would compromise, and more or less minimize, the role of the United Nations efforts to maintain at least an equilibrium and avoid military methods that would kill more innocent civilians than active combatants of a regime. Needless to say, it would destroy an infrastructure in Iraq that is already so weak that it would plunge the population into more dire misery.



*Government Orders*

Canada in the past has gained recognition in the world as a peacekeeper, not as a powder monkey. I often feel that if we cannot adhere to the charter of the United Nations, what hope is there in this world to eventually have peace?

I am expressing what many in the past have probably said in this chamber. A civilized world cannot have one or a few nations with incredible military might imposing their methods or ways. One powerful and supported international body like the United Nations is really the only solution to curb and dismantle regimes of tyrants and madmen, and the case in point is Saddam Hussein in Iraq.

Many of my colleagues here and across the way have shown the dangers that we could be involved in with a unilateral strike. It certainly would not be in the interests of the whole of the Middle East. It could destabilize some of the other countries over there and plunge us into a situation that could be disastrous to all nations in the world.

I was reading some American editorials and one that I read a few weeks ago appeared in *USA Today*. A rather interesting observation was made by the man who wrote the editorial.

He said that of all those in the present administration under President Bush, all those that are the hawks, not one of them has ever served in the military. They have never worn a uniform. They have not got a clue in the world about being a combatant or being in a situation like many hundreds of thousands of Americans were, be it in the Korean war, the Vietnam war or the second world war. On the other side, senators, some members of Congress, the house of representatives, and even the secretary of state, Colin Powell, and other people who have served in the military and know what is implicated, are constantly trying to explain that there is a serious danger.

I find that rather interesting. Those that know what warfare is about and what it can project us into are very weary. They are the people we should be listening to. I hardly have any faith in people who know nothing about military life or engagement in combat yet they are the most hawkish that we have.

● (2030)

My colleague from Edmonton gave me a document which I believe was written by a former ambassador to Canada from Europe. He had some very interesting comments about the situation. He stated that we have to remember that Iraq is a country of 23 million people. Ethnically speaking there are 75% to 80% who are Arab and 15% to 20% who are Kurdish. Of course 95% of the population are of the Islamic faith.

He went through some of the history of Saddam Hussein, how he seized power in 1979 and his war against Iran that caused nearly one million deaths. Then there was the war with Kuwait that was so destructive. Of course we are dealing with a tyrant and a madman.

We look further and see that some of his comments are quite interesting. He said that in reading the British intelligence dossier on Iraq, one could see that the grounds used to justify a war against Iraq are not so much based on actual weapons or facilities for which evidence is presented, but rather on potential developments that may or may not occur in the future. No instant overwhelming menace is offered and the possibility of other options is unmistakable. He said

that evidently going to war would unquestionably be excessive. There is no doubt about that.

The United Nations and the whole idea and principle of the charter was to at all costs avoid conflict like this where the lives of innocent people are taken.

These are his observations and he has had a long experience as a diplomat. We could go into detail and talk hours on end. We could go back into history, but essentially we should focus on this particular issue. His conclusion was that Iraq has been destroyed through war and embargo. A United States military unilateral operation against this already wretched country would, he claimed, constitute an act of state terrorism that would be likely to cause thousands of civilian casualties, adding to those that we had in 1990. It would increase the threat of terrorism dramatically because there is no doubt it would put a frenzy into a lot of maniacal people who feel that they have no alternative but to sacrifice themselves and bring about destruction on others. He said that there is no doubt in his mind it would destabilize the whole region.

We know that because of the strategic importance of the Middle East and the oil reserves, if there was a serious destabilization in that part of the world, it would have repercussions throughout the whole world. There is no doubt that it would plunge us into a recession and not only a recession but it would create such turmoil and conflict, it would take us years to get out of it.

In conclusion, let us hope and pray that the United Nations and the nations of this world realize that any unilateral action is against the best interests of all nations. With moderation and with the help of the United Nations, it can perform all the inspections it needs to ease our minds about this threat in Iraq.

● (2035)

**Mr. James Rajotte (Edmonton Southwest, Canadian Alliance):** Madam Speaker, the hon. gentleman said that a multilateral body such as the United Nations should be the only body to dismantle regimes of tyrants.

My question to him is what if the UN fails to act, as in the case of Cambodia, the case of Rwanda, the case of Uganda and the case even of the former Yugoslavia? What if the UN fails to act? Is he suggesting that NATO was not justified in going into the former Yugoslavia, as per the advice of the United Kingdom, as per the advice of the Czech president, Vaclav Havel? Is he suggesting that NATO was not justified in that activity? What is he suggesting we do as moral citizens of this world if the United Nations does not act, which it has not done in many instances in the past?

The member quoted a document that the minister passed out, and he kindly passed me the same document. This person does not want the U.S. to have a military intervention into Iraq. What this person is suggesting, this former diplomat from Canada, should happen is:

### *Government Orders*

Another course of action is available. The UN should take Baghdad on its word, the absence of any weapons of mass destruction has been asserted. And the promise of unfettered inspections has been made. In case limitations are imposed or an exception is made in future for whatever reason, this should be construed as an indication that there is something to hide. Any site—whether a palace or a school, a field hospital or a mosque—where access is obstructed or denied will be deemed to conceal military facilities, include industrial compounds or camouflage stockpiles of missiles and/or weapons. No need for inspection: the site will be destroyed. A raid of aircraft capable of night vision and precision guided bombing will do the job. Once the site is reduced to rubble, the inspection team should be allowed to examine this “ground zero” unless there still is some activity underground. New raids will follow until the team is satisfied that no threatening activity is unaccounted for.

That is what this former diplomat is suggesting. Instead of the U.S., the United Kingdom, Australia and others operating in an action against Iraq, is this what the member is suggesting the Americans and the others do in Iraq?

**Mr. Mark Assad:** Madam Speaker, I will take the second question first.

If, through the United Nations, they want complete access to all sites, nobody disagrees with that. They should have total access to all sites. If they find any evidence of weapons of mass destruction or biological warfare, they should act upon it. Nobody disputes that.

In the first question the member brought out the fact that the United Nations in the past, be it in Rwanda or other countries, did not act. That is true, it did not act. However, quite often, especially in the Security Council, some nation put a veto. Unfortunately it has been the case too often in the past where the veto has been used against the United Nations and therefore, it could not act. We have to keep that in mind.

I do not want to have to say who has used the veto more than anybody else in the United Nations since its creation, but they are very close to us.

• (2040)

**Mr. Peter Stoffer (Sackville—Musquodoboit Valley—Eastern Shore, NDP):** Madam Speaker, my hon. colleague across the way talked about those who were in uniform and those who were not in uniform in terms of the power of the United States. What he failed to mention was that over 80% of all American elected officials do not have a passport. They do not support the international criminal court. They do not support the international ban on landmines.

This is not just to rant and say I am anti-American in any way, contrary to the truth. The fact is when it comes to international agreements beyond what we are discussing here tonight, the United States is very reluctant to support the world community in an action of that nature.

The member mentioned the oil situation. Other people have said that the United States is so mad at Saddam Hussein because of George Bush's father. Other people have said it is because of the oil and the riches and the control of the wealth that is under the Iraqi soil. Other people have said it is for strictly crass political reasons.

What does the hon. member think is driving the United States to push so hard to get rid of Saddam Hussein? I agree that Saddam Hussein is someone who should not be around any more, but how we deal with him needs to be done on a multilateral approach.

I would like to ask the member exactly what he thinks is pushing the United States. Could it be September 11? Could it be a number of reasons?

**Mr. Mark Assad:** Madam Speaker, it is a combination of all those different things. The target was Afghanistan and bin Laden. Now it is Iraq and Saddam Hussein. I listened to an editorial by a journalist from *Le Monde* last week on the CBC French network where he said this whole thing has an odour of oil.

**Mr. Myron Thompson (Wild Rose, Canadian Alliance):** Madam Speaker, it seems to me as I listen to more of the speeches in the House that we have somehow or another forgotten the date of September 11. After that event we were shocked. Everyone in the world was shocked. Many of us were surprised that it went to that extent. The damage that it did was unbelievable.

Right after that event I listened to Mr. Bush several times and heard him loudly and distinctly say that the responsible people were terrorists and that America was declaring war on terrorism. Is that true? Did he declare war on terrorism? I am sure he did. Now suddenly we are listening to the fellow who just asked a question about the motives behind why these things are happening. Has September 11 been forgotten?

Americans are encouraging their president to continue down that line because the last thing they ever want to see happen again is another event that took place like September 11. They want all steps to be taken that are necessary to ensure that it never happens again.

I appreciate the paper I received from the hon. member from the Liberal Party. I appreciate that because it is a well thought out idea of an individual indicating the way he sees it. It is a rational thinking paper. I cannot argue with that. It is too bad that I did not write down some of the conversations that I had with military personnel from the United States who were in the gulf war and who spent a lot of time in that region, including my own son who has spent a few months in that region because he is in the United States army. He would ask this particular person: Do you not really understand how serious of a threat this human being is? Yes, there are dangers to whatever one does when it comes to war. We are at war with terrorism. Of course there are dangers. No one denies that.

I talked to people on both sides of the border. I was trying to get a feel for what the people on the ground were thinking about the world situation. They do not get the opportunity to read CSIS reports and FBI reports and military intelligence reports. They are common ordinary folk who would really like to get a feel for what is going on. They were adamant in saying that we must do everything that we can to make certain that this kind of thing never, ever happens again. They said that we must make absolutely certain that individuals who have indicated in the past that they are capable of bringing total disaster on numerous people, like Saddam Hussein, who has done it over and over again, who has made rash statements about how he would wipe out half of the Zion nation, are stopped. We cannot sit back and take that lightly.

I want to thank Dave Naylor, a reporter from the *Calgary Sun*. I never received permission to quote part of his article, but I think this man is bang on. He writes:

If we can stand up to him, all Europe may be free and the life of the world may move forward into broad, sunlit uplands. But if we fail, then the whole world, including the United States, including all that we have known and cared for, will sink into the abyss of a new Dark Age.

This is not a recent bit of rhetoric. This is from President George Bush in his attempt to acquire international support for a pre-emptive attack on Saddam. The quote is Winston Churchill commenting on Adolf Hitler. History has forgotten that Churchill, who was one of the greatest leaders of all time, was widely criticized as a warmonger. He was especially called a warmonger when he called for military action against Germany's new Nazi regime.

● (2045)

The then British Prime Minister, Neville Chamberlain, said that Churchill could not be trusted and described Churchill as “a dangerous man”. Chamberlain instead chose to trust Hitler. After meeting with Hitler in Munich, Chamberlain said that for the second time in British history a British Prime Minister has returned from Germany bringing peace with honour. He told his people to go home and get a nice, quiet sleep as all was well. It was not long before the world found out how well it could sleep and how well a tyrant could be trusted like Hitler. We are in the same situation now.

There is no evidence is what I hear over and over again. I even heard some of the Liberals quote the amount of tonnes of different kinds of gases, mustard and anthrax. They know about the quantities that are being produced. They know what Saddam Hussein did to thousands of people in his own land. They know of the episodes of beheading anyone who spoke against him and putting the head on public display for his own people to look at, so that they could learn a lesson that he was not putting up with anything. They know what kind of a tyrant he is.

When people such as George Bush and Tony Blair speak out in the manner that they are, they are not basing it on anything more than solid stuff that must be coming through strong intelligence work.

I would rather trust what they are doing in their hands than to trust diplomacy with a person like Saddam Hussein. He is not capable of being responsible or responsive to any diplomatic efforts. We must realize that. He has proven that over and over again. He has laughed in the face of the United Nations when he defied its resolutions 16 times. Do members of the House think it matters to him when he is of that frame of mind?

That is a little to the other side of some of the comments that I have heard, quite a bit to the other side. It is worth thinking about, as well as the document that was handed to me by my good friend from Edmonton. History and some of the hard facts about this human being must be seriously considered. What is the man capable of and what will he do?

Saddam Hussein does not hate the world because of poverty, as the Prime Minister believes. Iraq is not a poor nation. Iraq could be one of the richest nations on earth if Saddam was not squandering all his wealth on himself by amassing weapons that he will use against vast populations. He will use them.

Saddam Hussein is not an individual who reasons or feels any remorse. When is the last time the world has heard any remorse

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come from Saddam Hussein about anything? Did members see him weeping and sending condolences to the United States and to Canada when we lost our citizens when the mighty towers of the World Trade Center fell? I do not think so. He was probably cheering, smiling and enjoying it.

Soft diplomats on that side of the House prefer to work through multilateral, international institutions, meaning the United Nations. Yet in 1998 these same people supported limited military strikes by our good friends, the United States and Britain, and at that time there was no explicit Security Council authorization of any kind. What has happened to them now? Why was it supportable then and not now?

It is this kind of inconsistency that sends the wrong signal to Saddam Hussein. He sees hesitation as a weakness. He sees those who seek diplomatic solutions as weaklings. He is not a man of reason, nor is he a man of remorse and we should never forget that.

● (2050)

I wish to compliment the Liberals speakers who are here tonight for not bashing the United States as they did a couple of nights ago. Even Warren Kinsella came on TV and said that it was the wrong thing for them to do. These people to the south are our neighbours. I would like members who bash them one more time to stand in their place and tell me who they would like to have in their place as neighbours rather than the United States. They should stop it. These are people we can rely on. Let us get with the program.

**Ms. Aileen Carroll (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I listened carefully to the hon. member's colleague from Edmonton Southwest. The latter member gave a thoughtful discourse, which he is want to do in other venues where I have accompanied him.

I would ask the hon. member who has just concluded his remarks whether he would agree with the hon. member for Edmonton Southwest who believes that it is necessary, in the event that there is an action against Iraq, that there be a commensurate and large commitment to the reconstruction of that country following such a military action? Does he believe that such a commitment exists on the part of the United States and Great Britain to do so at this time?

**Mr. Myron Thompson:** Madam Speaker, I have seen the actions of the United States over the years. I have seen what happened after World War II in Japan. Who helped rebuild that? I saw what happened after World War II in Europe. Who helped rebuild that? I saw what happened in the Korean war conflict. Who went in there and tried to rebuild that? I know who and so does the hon. member. I agree that commitment should be there, but it is the last of my worries because I know it will always be there.

The United States and Canada must recognize that the Iraqi people are not the enemy. Saddam Hussein and his regime are the enemy and something has to be done regarding that regime on behalf of Iraq's citizens who want peace, who want to be able to enjoy life with their families like anybody else. They do not want to live under a ruler that beheads persons who do not agree with him and then puts their heads on display for their children to look at. He is telling the people, “Don't cross me or this could happen to you.”

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That commitment will be there. It always has been and it always will be. We will see it very soon in Afghanistan once the situation is at a stage for rebuilding. That is the least of my worries.

The biggest worry I have is our complacency to regard Saddam Hussein as a human being who can be reasoned with and with whom one can be diplomatic. He has proven to me, to hon. members and to you, Madam Speaker, many times that he is not to be trusted, not one iota.

• (2055)

**Mr. Andrew Telegdi (Kitchener—Waterloo, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, if we are to have success in the war against terrorism, it must be multilateral in nature. What seems to be clear is that the more unilateral the action taken by the United States, the fewer countries there will be fighting the war on terror.

We were all horrified by 9/11 and I imagine most of us are still horrified by what happened then. The point the Prime Minister was making is not too dissimilar from the point I made in the House last October. There are root causes that breed fanatics, not the leaders such as bin Laden who is wealthy and psychotic, but the foot soldiers. The more there are failed states in the world, the more there are people living in misery and the more people for bin Laden to manipulate. That is important and that is what the Prime Minister, in fairness, was addressing.

**Mr. Myron Thompson:** Madam Speaker, I did not hear a question. I do not agree with everything the gentleman says but I understand what he is saying and where he is coming from. I appreciate him trying to rationalize it in the way he desires to do. That is his privilege in Canada. It is not great to live in a country where we have the freedom to do that? Would it not be great if Iraqis could do the same thing?

**Mr. Ken Epp (Elk Island, Canadian Alliance):** Madam Speaker, I appreciate your indulgence, that of other members in the House who are here to listen, and the pages who are eager to work extra overtime. I am sure they have had their eyes opened to what goes on in this place in their first week of work here.

I originally was not going to speak on this topic but after listening to it for three nights now I have a few things I would like to add.

I would like to begin by telling members about Keith Primrose. Members would not have heard of him and I had actually forgotten about him because, as a matter of fact, I knew Keith Primrose about 46 years ago. He was a fine young guy in my class in grade 9. He seemed to occasionally get into trouble with other people because he was somewhat abrasive. Other than that I had very little to do with him and we got along fine, until one day, without provocation and without announcement, he came up behind me with a relatively heavy book or binder or something and smashed it as hard as he could on my head. Now I was raised in a home where we were taught to be non-combative, to not be aggressive, to not be violent. I had a very bad headache for the rest of the day, but I did nothing except to say to Keith Primrose that I did not appreciate what he had just done to me.

Lo and behold, not very much later, Keith Primrose, when we were down in the locker room one day, and I will never forget this, attacked me. He just started to try to beat me up. He made a mistake. What he forgot was that he was a city mouse and I was a country

mouse. I was used to throwing bales and other things, so even though I was maybe a little overweight even then, I had pretty good muscles.

It took but three seconds and I had him subdued. In typical schoolyard fashion that means that he was spread-eagled on the floor and I was on top of him holding his wrists down, at which point he began to spit at my face. I told him I would not do that if I were him, since gravity would help me better to do to him what he was doing to me. But I did not do it to him. I just held him there for the longest time. Now afterwards I had to go and wash my face, but I just held him. I just sat on the sucker until finally I said "When you're ready to tell me that you will never, ever touch me again I will get off, otherwise we're just staying here", at which point he spit at me again. Eventually his anger subsided and he said okay, he would give up. He could not do much. I was about 180 pounds at that time and I was quite capable of holding him down and not letting him move.

Why do I tell that story? Because there are ways of restraining a bad person, but it must be done. If we do not confront such a person and restrain him and do not bring him finally to the place where he is not the all powerful one, he will continue to wreak havoc. What does that have to do with this Iraqi war? I point directly to the fact that I think there is a principle here which directly relates to this individual.

A number of my colleagues and a number of people from all of the parties in this debate have talked about the fact that this is a person not to be trusted. The one example that I do not think has been indicated very often is that here is a man who at one stage had several of his daughters, three or four, leave the country with their husbands and their children to tell the rest of the world about what a tyrant this man was. They were so concerned about what was happening to their country and their families in that country that they even were ready to go public against their father, but they knew they had to escape from the country.

What did our friend Saddam Hussein do? He sent them a message saying that he missed his children, his daughters and his grandchildren, asking them why they did not all come home, saying that all would be forgiven but to just please come home. Do we remember that? This is that same man. They made the mistake of trusting him and they went home.

• (2100)

I understand that within a couple of days he personally took the lives of every one of his daughters' husbands, the fathers of his own grandchildren. He had them arrested, brought to his place and shot. This is the person with whom we are dealing. He will break trust even within his own family. Do we need to restrain this person? The fix is in. The evidence is clear. This is a person who is totally irrational. Does he have weapons? There is a lot of evidence that indeed he does.

Since 1998, UN inspectors have been basically driven out because Saddam Hussein will not let them into certain places. He has attempted to buy articles needed to build nuclear weapons such as the long aluminum pipes which are needed to get uranium up to weapons grade. I do not know whether he has been successful but I bet he has, somewhere indirectly.

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He has these kinds of weapons. Is he ready to use them? It is for no other reason than to promote his agenda, if he allows the United Nations to go into his country. It is for no other reason than to promote his agenda, if he promises to negotiate and make commitments. We have every reason in the world to be totally suspicious of this person. I do not believe we can allow him to do anything other than give the UN inspectors total access to every location in that country for the security of the people and the neighbouring countries around Iraq. I think we would be doing them a great favour.

Not many months ago Americans and Canadians went into Afghanistan. Pictures came back to this country showing people in the streets singing and cheering. They were finally free from an oppressive regime. I believe the people of Iraq would love to be freed from this person who is acting like a total tyrant and dictator. They are totally in bondage to him.

He does not permit elections. In Canada at least we have the hope of an election within every five years, and if we do not like our government, we can change it. We take that for granted. This guy controls Iraq and has no intentions of giving that up. There are no elections. The only way he could be replaced is if someone were to overpower him, and that has been attempted.

A small part of his army tried to take him out but he found out. If I remember correctly, he had some 200 generals or lieutenants of his armed force arrested and summarily executed publicly. This was done to show the people not mess with Saddam Hussein. This guy totally controls that country and those people. If we were in such a country would we dare to raise our hand? Who would dare to even say that the guy should be replaced? We would be arrested and executed. We in this country have no idea of the magnitude of that kind of oppression.

We need to stand alongside our other allies who want to put an end to this kind of terrorism. We need to be strong. Let us give the United Nations a chance. However we have to remember that the United Nations had those resolutions. When Saddam Hussein said there would be no access to various places contrary to the agreement, the United Nations folded. That was three years ago. Where has the United Nations been?

I agree 100% with the President of the United States when he says if the United Nations cannot not fix it, then he has no choice but to do it. It would be wonderful if the United Nations could come together and do the job right.

• (2105)

I believe the United Nations itself is at risk if it does not act decisively and strongly in this instance because if it fails to stop this tyrant, then the United Nations has become a useless organization. We need to make sure it has an opportunity to do that. We need to stop that person.

I should ask for unanimous consent to go on for five more minutes as my time is up. Otherwise I would have a lot more to say on this topic.

**Hon. David Kilgour (Secretary of State (Asia-Pacific), Lib.):** Madam Speaker, would my hon. next door neighbour in the Edmonton area be kind enough to say what he thought of that

statement by the retired European diplomat on how we could avoid a war in Iraq?

• (2110)

**Mr. Ken Epp:** Madam Speaker, yes indeed. I believe we need to give the United Nations an opportunity to do that. If it does not do it, then it must be allies who get together to say we will put an end to this.

The proposal has been made that the dictator of Iraq be given an ultimatum. It should be a rapid ultimatum. He either allows full and unfettered inspection of every location in Iraq within seven days or else we have no choice. When those inspectors are in there, as my colleague said, if they are denied access to any location, then it is automatically assumed advance notice is given. If access is denied, that is a tacit admission it is a place where planning and building of nuclear weapons or bacterial agents is taking place. That is an offensive place and it will be destroyed.

That would be a very fair way. Anything that happens from then on is totally on the conscience of Saddam Hussein himself because he can prevent the threat of violence to his own people. If he chooses not to, I would personally like to see advance notice of one day given. The people of Iraq should be informed somehow that at a certain time, a certain place will disappear and no one should be around there.

I would like that because that would greatly reduce the number of casualties of innocent civilians. Goodness knows the number of innocent people who are tied up in that country right now and who have no way of influencing the outcome. They are victims. Woe betide us if we do anything less than protect them to the max while we are setting them free. We do not want to shoot a person to give them freedom. That does not make any sense.

**Mr. Myron Thompson (Wild Rose, Canadian Alliance):** Madam Speaker, I would ask the hon. member to give me his thoughts on what he has heard in the last three days regarding this debate.

One thing is really bothering me. When I was in the United States this summer talking to people, I was able to stand toe to toe with them and look them right square in the eye and take them on regarding free trade issues that have become unfair. I was able to debate with them about softwood lumber and agricultural issues. At the same time I was able to console with them and be remorseful and let them know that we on the north side of the line are with them all the way. When it comes to fighting terrorism, they are our best friends.

Did the member get the feeling of the sentiments that I had, especially Monday night, of the anti-American comments that were being made that have even brought Warren Kinsella of all people to say on TV that it was wrong?

**Mr. Ken Epp:** Madam Speaker, yes indeed, a number of people have contacted our offices to express their opinions on this issue. Very frankly, a great number of them have said to avoid war if at all possible. However, most of them also went on to say that if it could not be avoided in the future, perhaps it would be better to limit the losses by doing something now.

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On the other hand, there are a great number of people who are saying this is a threat as serious as any that the world has ever faced. We need to have the assurance as an international community that our world is safe from this kind of attack and threat. We ought to be decisive and supportive of the allies who are in that war against worldwide terrorism.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos):** There being no further members rising, pursuant to order made on Wednesday, October 2, 2002, the motion is deemed withdrawn.

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

(The House adjourned at 9:14 p.m.)

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