



CANADA

# House of Commons Debates

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OFFICIAL REPORT  
(HANSARD)

**Monday, November 4, 2002**

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**Speaker: The Honourable Peter Milliken**

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# HOUSE OF COMMONS

Monday, November 4, 2002

The House met at 11 a.m.

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*Prayers*

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• (1100)

[*Translation*]

**The Speaker:** I wish to inform the House of an error in today's Order Paper. The motion on second reading of Bill C-17 should read: and referral to a legislative committee.

I regret any inconvenience this may have caused hon. members.

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## PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

• (1105)

[*English*]

### CRIMINAL CODE

**Mr. Art Hanger (Calgary Northeast, Canadian Alliance)** moved that Bill C-215, an act to amend the Criminal Code (prohibited sexual acts), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

He said: Mr. Speaker, this is not the first time that I have risen in the House to speak on this bill. The basic premise of Bill C-215 is to raise the age of sexual consent from 14 to 16 years of age.

The bill has been introduced into the House for the fifth time now and it is the second time for debate. None of those times of course resulted in the bill becoming a votable item on the agenda in the House. Needless to say I am disappointed that the bill, which is aimed at protecting children, would be deemed non-votable by members of the subcommittee on private members' business.

I first would like to acknowledge those who have fought relentlessly in their efforts to protect children and in particular those who have really sought to raise the age of sexual consent even higher than what is proposed in the bill, which is 16. Some even have deemed it necessary to raise it to the age of 18, with which I have to agree. However, I will bring to the attention of the House and to the public at large some of those who have really fought hard for this.

First on my list is Focus on the Family. Dr. Darrel Reid is the chief director of Focus on the Family and has been very much aware of the political inhibitors to issues like this and others that are out to protect children.

Another organization that has struggled for years and has probably put out more material outlining why things have gone the way they have with legislation regarding the protection of our children than any other organization I know of is the Canada Family Action Coalition, Mr. Brian Rushfeld. My hat is goes off to him too.

Also the Canadian Police Association has been consistent in its delivery of the need to increase the age limit. The hands of all police officers and social workers have been tied. They know many children are at risk but they cannot do a thing about it because the so-called age of consent has really been difficult for them to get around. Some have resorted to other means in trying to protect children, but unfortunately the law does not work to their benefit.

I would also like to acknowledge the Canadian Chiefs of Police and in particular, Chief Julian Fantino of the Toronto Metro Police Department. Chief Fantino has been instrumental in bringing this issue to the attention and focus of the police departments and the different agencies, those that have come together to help fight the whole issue of child exploitation. Chief Fantino has travelled the world looking at other jurisdictions. He knows what is happening worldwide, and is probably a leading expert on enforcement when it comes to child exploitation laws. Again, I want to acknowledge Chief Fantino.

I would also like to acknowledge the tens of thousands of Canadians who have signed petitions over the years. They have sought to have the age of consent raised since I have been in Parliament. I delivered this message on their behalf to Parliament that they wanted to see something very significant happen in the laws that would protect children. This so far has fallen on deaf ears.

There are another probably three groups of people that I would like to acknowledge and thank. Journalists from every media who have carried profound stories of child abuse exposing the shortcomings in the present law. Phenomenal articles have been written and programs have been aired over television and radio about child abuse and exploitation. Information is there which makes it very clear that there is a need for change.

• (1110)

I would also like to acknowledge the justice ministers from the various provincial governments and concerned politicians who are now pushing for change. I know that presently in Calgary the justice ministers from all the provinces are meeting and will be meeting with their federal counterparts. This will be one issue that will be debated and discussed. I can only hope that common sense prevails here because this is long overdue.

*Private Members' Business*

Those sitting in the seats of power across the way have had ample opportunities to make this change and have failed to do so, but here is another opportunity. I support the endeavours of the federal government Minister of Justice and the Solicitor General, who will be meeting with their counterparts in the provinces, to put this issue on the table and make it happen, make it reality.

I would also like to acknowledge one other group here. Information, as it flows, comes from various sources but the most heart-rending of all stories are those from the children who have now become adults and who were in abusive situations at the hands of predators with evil intent. Their stories really have kept this momentum to raise the age of sexual consent. Their stories are the ones that are most profound and should have the greatest impact on what is about to happen. They should have an impact in Parliament where, while there is room for strong debate on these issues, there has to be some action. I hope their stories ultimately will be the ones that will push the government to do something. I commend those who have suffered abuse for their courage to tell their stories openly and publicly.

How did we get to this point of such a low age of sexual consent? That is a question that many have asked in the past. Some of it is rather fuzzy as to why this happened. At one time, before 1987, the age of sexual consent was 18. How did it all of a sudden get dropped dramatically to age 14?

In 1987 the Mulroney government, the Conservative government of the day, reduced the age of consent for sexual activity from 18 to 14. It was no longer criminal to engage in sexual activity of various kinds with youngsters between the ages of 14 and 18. Since that time the Liberal government has made no attempt to change this law, but I suspect that things are about to change. Hopefully it will see the light and adjust this to protect our kids.

One might ask how the current law hurts our children. First, the papers have been full of stories of predators attacking our kids. These are only the known stories and they hit our newspapers on a daily basis. I do not think there is a member in the House who does not have some situation in his or her riding that reflects the abuse of a predator on a youngster under the age of 16, 15, maybe even 14, and many even younger than that.

• (1115)

It is not to say that raising the age would eliminate predators. That is another issue for another day. I have introduced a private member's bill which will be subject to a one hour's debate on that in the future.

There are many predators out there. Their intent is to put themselves into positions of trust and work their way into positions of authority. What happens then is that they are sitting in a situation where we have our most vulnerable and they are able to attack them. Unfortunately they are not treated harshly enough. The average sentence for a pedophile is just over a year. That is the average. What does a pedophile do? He attacks the young, the vulnerable. That is appalling. Yet that is what has happened.

One of the high profile cases to which I want to relate, and many do, is a prime example of what is happening in our society. I am speaking of John Robin Sharpe, a pornographer. He likes making movies of little kids, distributing and selling them at a profit. This is

his forte in our society. Back in August this man, after being charged previously, was charged with indecent assault and gross indecency. The allegations involved a boy who was 12 to 13 years old at the time. Mr. Sharpe had befriended the boy some time back in 1979. It takes a long time for things to come to light sometimes, especially when we see the impact of this kind of attack on our children. It takes a while for them to come to grips with these things. There were other victims as well and it required a lot of follow-up investigations.

I have been a police officer myself for 22 years. I had cause to assist in some of these investigations while working in the major crime section of the Calgary Police Department. I know what kind of resources and special training it takes to work with youngsters who are subject to this kind of abuse. It takes a lot. The resources are never enough because this crime has become more insidious. That is why we must take these characters out of our society for a long period of time so that our children would be much safer.

Another problem is how this current law affects and hurts our children. Agencies are loaded with all kinds of work and they cannot keep up with all the complaints coming in. As a result there are some predators out there who are not apprehended, not detected and unfortunately they are victimizing others.

How else does that law hurt our children? Unfortunately there are organizations and individuals out there wanting more liberalization in the law. I could go on and on. I could read from the bill what kind of offences are involved here: everything from pimping youngsters of 14 years of age to subjecting them to degrading sexual acts for pornographers. It goes on and on. By raising the age of consent the bill would impact on numerous sections of the Criminal Code.

I trust, hope and pray that the provincial justice ministers and the federal justice minister reach a decision on raising the age of consent.

• (1120)

**Mr. Paul Harold Macklin (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak to Bill C-215, an act to amend the Criminal Code respecting certain prohibited sexual acts. I welcome the opportunity to speak to the bill because, and as the hon. member has stated, the objective of the bill is important, namely, to better protect our children against sexual exploitation. The government's commitment in this regard is clear and strong. It is committed to protecting children from sexual, and indeed, all forms of exploitation.

As stated in the Speech from the Throne, the government believes that Canadians have a collective responsibility to protect our children from exploitation in all its forms. The government is committed to reforming the Criminal Code to increase penalties for abuse and neglect, and to provide more sensitive treatment for children who participate in criminal justice proceedings as victims and as witnesses.

Although we can agree on the importance of the bill's objective, the government does not support it. Bill C-215 addresses an issue which hon. members know has received considerable attention in recent months. The government welcomes this debate today for it is through such discussions that we are able to broaden the knowledge and understanding of the issue at hand.

*Private Members' Business*

I would like to take a moment to review the facts about the minimum age of consent in Canada. I want to do this because I am aware that the discussion of this issue in recent months has sometimes reflected a misunderstanding of Canada's criminal laws that protect children against sexual exploitation. This is not entirely surprising because the issue of the age of consent to sexual activity is complex.

The Criminal Code sets the age of consent at 14 years of age for most purposes, but there are two notable exceptions. First, where the relationship is exploitive, the age is set at 18 years. For example, the consent to sexual activity by a young person who is 14 years of age or older but under the age of 18 years is not valid where the older person is in a position of trust or authority over the young person, or the young person is in a position of dependency upon that older person. The age is also set at 18 for purposes relating to prostitution and child pornography. These are important facts that seem to not find a proper expression today.

Second, where the young person is close in age to the older person, the age of consent can be 12 years where the older person is 12 years or older but under the age of 16, is less than two years older than the younger person, and is not in a position of trust or authority toward the younger person, and the younger person is not in a relationship of dependency with the other.

I want to be clear on this. Any non-consensual sexual activity, no matter what the age, is sexual assault. I also want to note that the general minimum age of consent to sexual activity has been 14 years of age since 1890 when it was raised from 12 years of age. The issue of age of consent to sexual activity is a complex issue. It is an issue on which there is a divergence of opinion.

At the end of 1999 the Department of Justice launched a comprehensive public consultation and review of the need for further criminal law reforms to enhance the criminal law's protection of children. This consultation and review focused on the need for criminal law reforms relating to specific offences against children, sentencing, facilitating child victim and witness testimony, and the minimum age of consent.

• (1125)

Hon. members will recall that the Minister of Justice discussed the results of this consultation and review with provincial and territorial ministers responsible for justice in February of this year. Ministers then directed federal, provincial and territorial senior officials to develop follow-up responses for consideration by ministers. I can indicate to hon. members that this matter will be discussed at the current meeting of the federal, provincial and territorial ministers responsible for justice in Calgary this week. I suggest that we should await the outcome of these discussions.

I believe that Canadians do want to better protect children against sexual exploitation, including new forms of sexual exploitation, and yet, Bill C-215 does not respond to this concern.

Last year the government introduced Bill C-15A, which included amendments to the child pornography provisions of the Criminal Code. Bill C-15A created a new offence of using a computer system, such as the Internet, to lure a young person for the purposes of committing one of the enumerated sexual offences against the child.

This new offence is now found in section 172.1 of the Criminal Code and I am pleased to note that it was proclaimed on July 23, 2002.

Recent media accounts indicate that this new offence is being used to charge persons who have used the Internet to lure persons under the age of 14 years, yet Bill C-215 does not address this new offence of luring.

Bill C-215 does not address section 810.1 of the Criminal Code which permits the granting of a recognizance order or peace bond to prohibit a defendant from attending specified places, such as parks and school grounds, where children under the age of 14 years could reasonably be expected to be found and there would be reasonable grounds to believe the defendant would commit a sexual offence against a child.

I note these two omissions to illustrate my point that the issue of the age of consent to sexual activity is complex. There are many related provisions in the Criminal Code to protect children against sexual exploitation and abuse. We must take care to ensure that any legislative reform in this area is responsive to the concerns at hand, is reflected in all related Criminal Code provisions, and does not have unintended negative consequences. Bill C-215 does not do this. For all these reasons, the government does not support Bill C-215.

[Translation]

**Mr. Richard Marceau (Charlesbourg—Jacques-Cartier, BQ)**  
Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to take part in the debate on Bill C-215, introduced by my colleague from the Alliance. This bill, sponsored by the member for Calgary Northeast, could not be more directly linked with that party's dominant philosophy in favour of a harder line for the entire criminal justice system.

We need to look at the specific character of the legislative amendment proposed. It is no more and no less than a raising of the legal age of consent to sexual acts. The framework surrounding the concept of consent in the Criminal Code is a rather complex one, but can be summarized in three points.

First, the consent of a person under the age of 14 years is not a defence against a charge of sexual aggression, exhibitionism, sexual touching and the like.

This means that a person over the age of 14 years is in a position to give consent.

Second, there is an exception to this rule. Plaintiff consent may be a defence if:

- the accused (a) is over 12 and under 14 years of age;
- (b) is 12 years of age or more but under the age of 16;
- (c) is less than two years older than the complainant; and
- (d) is neither in a position of trust or authority towards the complainant nor is a person with whom the complainant is in a relationship of dependency.

Third:

a person in a situation of authority or trust may not have sexual contact with a person aged 14 to 17, even if the minor consents.

In attempting to make the legal framework more strict for sexual activities involving youth, the Canadian Alliance hopes to protect their virtue. However, there is a contradiction in the approach of the Canadian Alliance when it comes to youth justice. Allow me to explain.

*Private Members' Business*

The purpose of the Alliance proposal is to increase the age of consent from 14 to 16. First off, in our opinion, there is not much to debate about this. We know that young people engage in sexual activities at a younger age and the prevention campaigns that have been created for them work relatively well.

We believe that an approach based on listening to young people and sincere dialogue with youth works much better when it comes to sexual education than the punitive approach that the Canadian Alliance promotes.

The society in which we live has evolved considerably, so much so, that what used to be considered taboo is now discussed with complete openness and with a sometimes alarming candour. This is more the case in Quebec, which has the well-earned reputation of being the most liberal society in North America, when it comes to these matters; more so than the rest of Canada.

But, and this is where it gets touchy for the Canadian Alliance, what is the logic behind that party wanting to legislate the raising of the age of sexual consent, when in the whole debate on tightening the Young Offenders Act, it called for the age at which children can be tried in adult court to be dramatically lowered.

Indeed, in the debate on the young offenders bill, the Canadian Alliance supported an approach described as a hard line approach whereby 16 and 17 year olds, as well as 14 and 15 year olds charged with serious crimes, would be tried before adult court. This was in its own platform.

Now these 14 and 15 year olds, who are apparently mature enough to commit crimes, would not be able or capable of consenting to sexual activity? This is definitely double talk.

The Canadian Alliance's reasoning does not hold water. The initiative before us is, once again, a reflection of the Alliance's propensity to take a piecemeal approach to amending the Criminal Code, depending on the personal opinions of its members or popular trends in western Canada.

What they are suggesting would inevitably result in an unmanageable legal mess and would run counter to the fundamental principles of the administration of justice.

The objective pursued by the Alliance would be counter-productive in that it would criminalize the personal activities of young people on the basis of their age, instead of protecting them from sexual predators. To conclude, the Bloc Québécois opposed this legislation in the past and remains opposed to it for the two main reasons mentioned earlier: while it may not be desirable for young people aged 14 and 15 to have sexual relations, the provisions referring to this age reflect what society is prepared to tolerate. The Canadian Alliance is using double talk.

● (1130)

In the debate on young offenders, they argued that adolescents 14 or 15 years of age were mature enough to be held criminally responsible for their actions, but in this debate on the age of sexual consent, they are arguing that the 14 year olds are not mature enough.

Consequently, the Bloc Québécois is opposed to the bill, even though it is not a votable item.

**Mr. Peter MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough, PC):**

Mr. Speaker, it is an honour for me to take part in this debate. I congratulate the Bloc Québécois member for his very intelligent comments. These are remarks that present many important perspectives.

● (1135)

[*English*]

I also want to congratulate the parliamentary secretary who has delved into this issue in detail and has made the informed comment that we should engage and encourage our provincial colleagues to take this issue up.

I want to turn now to the mover of the motion who has been, in my view, relentless in his pursuit of this issue and who takes the issue very seriously. He comes to this place with a perspective that is important, as a frontline police officer having dealt with child victims I suspect, having heard that in his commentary. I have great respect for what he is trying to accomplish here.

The bill has been before the House in the past, which is again a tribute to the member's persistence. As was stated previously in the debate, whenever we look at the Criminal Code of Canada we have to look at all the implications. It is somewhat like a game of dominoes. It can have implications that may not have been completely anticipated. I know that is not the desire of the mover of the motion.

I want to make a brief comment on the subject of private members' bills. We have repeatedly seen, throughout the history of this place, private members' bills that come forward that have a great idea, that are intended purely for the improvement of society or for the improvement of a certain situation and the government will tear those ideas limb from limb and dismiss them. Then a short time later we will see the bill come back under the name of the government where the mover might then be a minister and it suddenly becomes a great idea.

I am not suggesting that will happen here but the commentary from the parliamentary secretary at least indicates that there is a willingness to examine this issue.

I also want to address a situation that was referred to by the mover of the motion from Calgary, Bill C-15, which was passed in 1989, and delved into the subject matter of the age of consent. Under the Progressive Conservative government that bill replaced prior unsuitable legislation. What was left out of the commentary by the member from Calgary was that the bill in essence prohibited adults from engaging in virtually any act or any kind of sexual contact with boys or girls under the age of 14.

The bill also made it illegal for adults in positions of trust or authority to have sexual contact with minors between—and here are the key words—the ages of 14 to 18. It did not raise the age of consent.

Therefore, by simply stamping the age 16 in place in all those sections of the Criminal Code there is a danger that a very naive, unworldly and vulnerable youth age 17 might fall outside the parameters of the hon. member's bill.

We have heard the sad tales, and there are many, of people in positions of trust, those involved in the church or in the school system, foster parents and, sadly, even family members and parents, who take advantage of youth who are now under the age of 18, not 16.

We want to be very careful when we look at changing sections of the Criminal Code not to narrow further the ability of the prosecution to proceed with charges when positions of trust are involved. It is always important to look at the whole perspective here.

I again commend the emotion and the diligence with which the mover of the motion has brought to this debate. It is tragic beyond belief that there are sexual predators out there.

Sexual predators can be found in any province, any community, any corner of this country. We have all heard of many infamous cases such as at Mount Cashel in Newfoundland and at the school for boys in Shelburne in my home province of Nova Scotia. We know there are sad cases involving native schools where young people were preyed upon. Maple Leaf Gardens is another institution in which horrible instances of abuse took place. Those are terrible cases where individuals were preyed upon, sadly, by persons who they should have been able to rely upon for protection. However the opposite occurred.

The Goler case in Nova Scotia is one that motivated me to bring forward a private member's bill which would in fact expand the parameters of the Criminal Code to allow a judge to put in place prohibitions about attending dwelling houses. Currently it specifically mentions schools, pools, places where children frequent, but it does not include dwelling houses where the majority of sexual assault cases occur.

The life altering and lasting implications and the damage that results to young people being abused is shocking and abhorrent to all Canadians and all members of Parliament. We have heard time and time again the horrible events that can occur in a child's life. What better place is there than the Parliament of Canada to address those issues and address any shortcomings that might exist? What higher calling, what higher place could there be to protect children from this fate than the House of Commons?

Sexual predators I submit very firmly are not always interested in sex but are interested in power, control and severe violence. That reinforces the worry that parents have each and every time their children leave home.

Another sad phenomenon that occurs is where victims, in some instances in attempt to regain power over their own lives, go out and become perpetrators. That is a very sad implication from the effects of having been abused as a child.

Some provinces, including I believe the province of the hon. member who moved the motion, have taken initiatives in terms of protecting our most vulnerable. The Ontario government, for example, needs to be commended for its decision to launch the

### *Private Members' Business*

first ever sex offender registry of its kind in Canada. Each sex offender in Ontario must register within 15 days of being released from custody. The same applies to those serving sentences in the community. The file will contain the offender's address, phone number, physical description, aliases and list of offences. Such information is critical to policemen if they are to be able to afford the protection for the children who might become victims.

Chief Fantino was mentioned in the remarks by the mover of the motion and the good work that he is doing on behalf of protecting children in the province of Ontario and specifically in Toronto.

Offenders sentenced to less than 10 years must report their whereabouts for 10 years under the Ontario registry, and offenders sentenced to periods of incarceration longer than 10 years will remain on the registry for life. This is the type of bold, proactive and, in some instances, harsh legislation that we might need to protect children.

The Ontario government cares about public safety and is reacting to the concerns of communities in that province. Its law was passed in honour of Christopher Stephenson, and the law is often referred to as Christopher's law. Fourteen years ago young Christopher was abducted at knife point in a Brampton mall, sexually assaulted and murdered by repeat sex offender Joseph Fredericks.

That is the type of case that sadly is the motivation for this type of change in the law, and I know the type of motivation that is behind the mover.

It is absolutely gut-wrenching that something like that must happen before politicians, present company included, and legislators take notice. However these examples illustrate how important it is to take these initiatives that can prevent lifelong suffering, murder, exploitation and the terrible instances of sexual assault and intrusion into young people's lives.

We talk about making sentences longer. These sentences are life sentences for young people when they have been victimized.

I mentioned the anomaly of adopting the bill in its current form. I know that the hon. member might be open to making certain amendments to it. I am glad to see that this debate is taking place. I look forward to seeing the bill proceed through the chamber and being taken to the justice committee where it could be discussed further.

The hon. member for Calgary Northeast has brought forward the legislation with the best of motivations, and I congratulate him for that.

● (1140)

He knows and I know that more can be done. As a police officer, he already has done a great deal in this area and I have nothing but respect for what he is trying to do. I am pleased that the bill is back before Parliament. Let us make the necessary changes that we need to ensure that there are real consequences for those who break the law and those who prey upon children.

*Private Members' Business*

**Mr. Monte Solberg (Medicine Hat, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to rise and address Bill C-215 today. I want to start where my friend from Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough left off, by congratulating the member for Calgary Northeast who has been relentless in bringing forward this bill. He is deeply concerned about children and that is a sentiment that is shared around the House.

But I also want to note that what is troubling about this is that it has been raised a number of times. While the issue is complex, and I agree with both the parliamentary secretary and also my Conservative friend that it is complex, there are some things that we all agree on. One of those things is this: I do not think that there is anybody in this place who believes that it is perfectly licit for an adult, a 35 year old or 40 year old man, to seek out and prey upon, for instance, a 14 year old girl. I think just about everyone in this place thinks that is wrong and that is the sort of thing we need to get at.

With respect, I think the parliamentary secretary was somewhat disingenuous when he tossed out red herrings about Bill C-215 not addressing things like luring over the Internet. He knows very well that this is not the intent of the bill. What my friend from Calgary Northeast wants to do is draw attention to something very specific. He wants the age of consent raised from 14 to 16 so that we do not see the type of activity that already has been referred to in the House, whereby adults prey upon naive young people who are not yet mature enough to distinguish between somebody who is preying on them and somebody who truly cares about them. That is what we are trying to get at. That is why my friend brought forward the bill. I wish the government would get that message instead of trying to get us off track with red herrings.

I remind the House that back on April 23 the official opposition, urged by our leader, the member for Calgary Southwest, who had only been our leader for a few weeks at that time, brought forward a particular supply motion which called for the age of consent to be raised to at least the age of 16. Sadly, most of the government members, and to their credit not all of them, voted against that. I would like to think that they were simply naive about what was at stake. I will not attribute anything to them other than that, because this is an issue that the public is deeply concerned about. I am sure that there is not a member in this place who has children who does not shudder at the thought of having their 14 year old son or daughter being preyed upon by somebody who is much older, preyed upon explicitly for the purpose of having sex.

Not awfully long ago, just a number of months ago, my friend from Lethbridge and I went to the border crossing at Coutts, Alberta. One of the things that the customs officials told us they were running into more and more was instances of sexual predators trying to lure young men and women into the United States. They would come up into Canada and try to pick them up and take them back across the border, or it would work in reverse. The point is that this is something that is increasing in prevalence. The government is not doing its job if it does not start to put in place some measures to begin to address this.

I acknowledge that in Bill C-15A the government did do something about this with its changes to the Criminal Code affecting

Internet luring. The Canadian Alliance, by the way, was at the forefront of promoting that. We wanted that legislation in place. I am glad that the government followed our advice when it came to that. We were able to get the bill split so that we could pass it very quickly. We were happy to do that, along with other members of the opposition, but the government simply has not gone far enough.

● (1145)

Maybe the best way of making my point is to say that when one is involved in an area where there are a lot of complexities and it is unclear which way to proceed, my guidance to the government is to always proceed in a way that gives the benefit of the doubt to the potential victims. That is the answer. When we are not sure, we should err on the side of protecting victims, in this case, on the side of protecting children. Governments, in their misguided desire to be completely fair to everyone, think that is an excuse for not acting at all and that is unacceptable. It is unacceptable when we are talking about young children, 14 years of age and 15 years of age in this case. That is completely unacceptable.

It is my hope that in the discussions the justice minister says he will have with the provinces eventually, the government will bring forward legislation that reflects the intent of my friend's bill. As the member for Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough pointed out, very often the government will stand up and decry particular pieces of private members' business only to turn around and adopt particular pieces of it later on and laud how wonderful they are and what a great job they are doing for the public. Let us hope that the government is not being disingenuous this time. I suspect that to some degree it is.

Of course I hope that in the end it adopts this legislation, but if it is going to do that then it should have the courage of its convictions and should congratulate my friend from Calgary Northeast for what he is trying to do, again to protect children. I see many good members on the government side right now who I know believe in the intent of my friend's bill. I hope that they push the justice minister and the parliamentary secretary to do the right thing and support this bill, although it is not votable, which in and of itself is a shame. Although it is not votable, we do hope that they will push the justice minister and the justice committee to do the right thing and adopt the spirit of Bill C-215 and also give credit where credit is due, and not just to my friend from Calgary Northeast. He has pointed out that there have been many others in this place and outside it who have promoted raising the age of consent to the age of 16. He has mentioned Chief of Police Fantino, the Canadian Police Association, the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police, and Focus on the Family Canada, headed up by our friend Darrel Reid, who does a wonderful job in promoting issues that protect and strengthen families.

All of these people deserve credit. I can assure everyone that this place would receive praise and accolades from the entire public if the government would quit dragging its heels on this important piece of legislation and adopt what my friend from Calgary Northeast is arguing for.



• (1150)

**Mr. Art Hanger:** Mr. Speaker, I certainly want to acknowledge the comments made by all members who have contributed to this debate within the short period of time we have had. I believe this deserves a lot more than just one hour of debate. The effort was made at the subcommittee on private members' business to convince it that this matter should be a votable matter. I still believe that it should be a votable matter in spite of the fact that the committee refused to accept it as such.

I am going to go back to this issue in reference to the comments made about this bill. If, in the view of the government, there is some flaw in the bill, it certainly has the right to bring that up and pay attention to where it may fall short. I certainly am willing to accept that aspect of what is happening here in our Parliament. It is part of the process. On the other hand, the government also has a responsibility to protect our children, so if there is some shortfall in the bill then let us correct it and go forward with it.

I do not buy the argument that this is a complex matter, because really all it takes is to raise the age of consent from 14 to 16. It is very simple. Everything else stays the same.

**An hon. member:** It is complicated.

**Mr. Art Hanger:** I do not see anything complicated about it.

I am going to refer to some comments made by a friend of mine, a staff sergeant on the Calgary city police force, who for years worked on the police services vice unit and was the coordinator of Project 118 Children's Services. As a law enforcement officer, he issues a warning. He warns that the low age of legal sexual consent provides official legislative sanction for promiscuity and sexual activity for youth. He states:

This law makes it easier for recruiters and predators—for example, a 15-year-old living with a 45-year-old.

This staff sergeant, Ross MacInnes, founded Street Teams, an agency that helped get girls off the street. He states that Canadian law makes it difficult to rescue children from dangerous situations. If a 14-year-old girl runs away from home, for example, international protocol makes it possible to get her back from California within 12 hours and from Mexico within 24 hours. Says MacInnes:

But I can't get her back from another city within Canada. There is a view in Canada—and the age of consent is one factor—that there is a form of emancipation taking place, and that the youngster is capable of making her own choice.

That is the view and that is what I am attempting to fight with this bill. It is one that I think the government should be addressing head on.

In conclusion, I think one of the most important benefits of raising the age of consent would be to send a clear message from our government that Canadian children have value and that we as a society are committed to protecting them.

• (1155)

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair):** The time provided for the consideration of private members' business has now expired. As the motion has not been designated as a votable item, the order is dropped from the order paper.

*Supply*

## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

### SUPPLY

ALLOTTED DAY—CANADIAN FORCES

**Mrs. Elsie Wayne (Saint John, PC)** moved:

That this House condemn the government for continuing to overstretch our military personnel and call on the government to increase spending more than is currently planned, as the Canadian Forces need more money simply to continue operating in a sustainable way.

She said: Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the right hon. member for Calgary Centre.

Ten days ago at a meeting of the Toronto Board of Trade, the Minister of National Defence stated “With those brave young Canadians who I met in Afghanistan firmly in the back of my mind, I say to you that it is simply wrong that we treat in a shabby way those of our fellow citizens who risk their lives for us”.

That statement was made nine years to the day that I was elected to this House and it is without question as honest an assessment of the government's record as I have ever heard. A concession by the Minister of National Defence that we were mistreating our armed forces personnel would be noteworthy in and of itself, but the minister used the same occasion to call for an increase in our defence spending.

He argued that although the government had used its most recent budget to increase defence spending, it was simply not enough. We in the Progressive Conservative caucus could not agree more with the minister.

I would ask that the House and those in it do not confuse my anger with surprise, for the sad reality is that the revelations made by the minister in his remarks were not new. They are the same disheartening facts that have been uncovered by the Standing Committee on National Defence and Veterans Affairs and its companion committee in the other place.

They are the same facts known to our American neighbours and NATO allies. They are the same facts known to anyone who has looked at a newspaper or watched the news in the last five years.

It was however, the first time that a Minister of National Defence has acknowledged and confirmed the government's record on defence. I for one applaud the minister for his remarks. We should all recognize the personal courage it must have taken to prepare and deliver a speech that exposed the inadequacies of the government in which he serves. I hope that the minister's integrity in this regard will inspire others in the cabinet to act accordingly.

In the fiscal year 1993-94 our national defence budget was \$12 billion but by 1998-99 that total was down to a mere \$9.4 billion, a reduction of 22%. This was despite the fact that in the same period the operational tempo of our armed forces, that is to say that ratio of time spent by our military in deployed missions, rose from a mere 6.2 to 23.2, an increase of almost 400%.

### *Supply*

In short, for close to 10 years we have asked our military men and women to do significantly more with dramatically less. If we care to calculate our military spending as a percentage of our national gross domestic product, a non-partisan conservative calculation would show that it hovers between 1.1% and 1.2% of Canada's GDP. This is the third worst record in all of NATO, only better than Iceland and Luxembourg, two nations with populations of roughly 275,000 and 450,000 respectively.

When any department, let alone one as important as the Department of National Defence, has had its budget reduced by roughly a quarter in a period of only a few years, its ability to honour commitments will be necessarily affected.

It saddens me to report to the House that our military is no longer able to conduct the type and kind of missions that it could in the recent past. The equipment that we have in our arsenal has been allowed to age and deteriorate to the point where it is no longer reliable or interoperable with other allied forces.

Worse still, our men and women in uniform are being abused to the point where too many of them are coming home from missions suffering from illnesses ranging from exhaustion to post traumatic stress disorder. This is the "shabby" treatment that the minister himself condemns.

We are fortunate in this country that we have courageous men and women who are willing to put their lives at risk to defend both this country and the values we espouse. They are nothing short of national heroes and they must be treated accordingly.

I am proud that in my time in this place my voice has been one of those in the chorus of voices calling out for the government to make a significant reinvestment in our military.

● (1200)

Prior to the tragic attacks of September 11, 2001, those of us asking for more defence spending were called alarmists. We were told that in the post-cold war world there was no need for Canada to maintain a robust military. How wrong they were and we all know it.

The terrorist attacks on New York and Washington revealed a sinister new threat to the globe. They demonstrated in the cruelest manner possible that we continue to live in a dangerous world and that we must always be vigilant in defence of our people.

The systematic dismantling of our military was a serious mistake and it remains a serious mistake. I fear that the consequences to Canadians could be deadly. Canadian blood has already been shed in the war on terrorism, first in the U.S. and later in Afghanistan. This is not some foreign conflict in which we have no interest. This is a Canadian fight, one in which we have a vested interest. By not doing our share of the work, by not lifting our share of the burden, we are both undermining our international alliances and dishonouring more than 100 years of military heritage.

Our mission is clear. We have a continuing obligation to fight alongside our allies abroad and defend our citizens here at home, but as the minister himself indicated, our Canadian armed forces are no longer in a position to do both with what we have given them. Again, to quote the minister, "The Canadian Forces need more money simply to continue operating as they are today in a

sustainable way". I would agree with that sentiment, but would take it even one step further. Without a meaningful and immediate reinvestment in our military, our national security is and remains at risk.

I know that some of my colleagues on the government benches will rise today and say that it is not just a money problem and that merely throwing money at it will not solve the problems. For the record, let me just say that I agree wholeheartedly with that. The government's problem is as much a problem with priorities. It is prepared to put everything ahead of national defence and national security. It is prepared to invest millions in other schemes, but when the military comes asking, the vault door seems to be shut in its face.

Moreover, the government should be condemned for how it wastes money: \$500 million to cancel the EH-101 contract to replace our antique Sea King helicopters; \$750 million to purchase used submarines that our sailors refuse to use now because the government refused to invest the money needed to refit and repair them; \$36 million to get the Americans to taxi our supplies back from Afghanistan because we do not have the airlift and sealift capacity to do it ourselves; \$65 million for a pilot training program that does not train pilots. The list goes on and on.

I have often told the House that our men and women in uniform do not have the choice to come to Parliament Hill, as so many other groups do, to protest the unjust cuts to the military's budget. They cannot come up here with placards to voice their concerns about their living arrangements, the food they receive on missions, or the tattered state of the combat uniforms given to them. The problem is that the government sees their silence as satisfaction when in truth it is only out of respect for the uniforms they wear and the people in Canada whom they serve.

I am convinced that if the government were to allow its members to vote as they saw fit on today's motion, there would not be a single vote cast against it. Many in the House have received letters from families of peacekeepers abroad worried that they do not have enough food and worried that they do not have the appropriate camouflage for the environment in which they are serving.

I do not know whether the Minister of National Defence showed a draft copy of his speech to the Prime Minister before he delivered it, but I do know if the minister gave any warning to the PMO that he would be criticizing government policy, it would not have sat well.

I cannot answer the question of the former finance minister whom he knows in the PMO. All I know is that the government has betrayed its best citizens to the point where even the minister responsible will not stand for it any longer. All I know is that the mistreatment of our armed forces personnel has gotten so bad that the minister himself has now said it is wrong.

Some 60 years ago, my brothers went to war for Canada. They did so because in their hearts they knew that it was their duty to fight for king and country. We now live in an age where the single greatest threat to the Canadian armed forces is the government.

•(1205)

When we wrote this motion, we did so using much of the same language that was used by the minister, except for a couple of words.

To the members on the government benches, I can only say that to vote against the motion, they vote against the expert opinion of the Minister of National Defence himself. If they vote against the motion, they vote against the men and women in our armed forces. If they vote against the men and women of the armed forces, they vote against Canada.

[*Translation*]

**Right Hon. Joe Clark (Calgary Centre, PC):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in this chamber today to support the motion of my colleague, the hon. member for Saint John.

[*English*]

For years she and other members of the House, of my party and of other parties, have been decrying the level of support afforded by the government to the men and women who serve the country as members of our armed forces. As my colleague remarked, between 1993 and 1998 the percentage of time our troops spent on deployed missions increased by 400% while funding for our military declined during the same period by 22%. Anyone with a rudimentary understanding of basic mathematics will tell us that is simply not sustainable.

[*Translation*]

For several years now, studies have been deploring the current funding level of the Canadian Forces. I am sure that a number of members of this House will use today's debate to add their voices to those who have been trying for so long to convince the government that the current funding level waters down our contribution to peacekeeping and puts our troops at risk.

[*English*]

That did not happen suddenly. It is the result of a continuing, cumulative deterioration of the equipment and morale of the Canadian armed forces. This is not something the government can blame on another party in office. One of the determining issues which elected the Liberal government was an issue of investment in national defence. The cancellation of the EH-101 helicopter contract was blatant not only in its partisanship, but in the way it trivialized Canada's commitment to the military.

This is about more than a failure to invest. It is about a failure to understand the importance of our military to a country like Canada. One of Canada's distinguishing assets is our international reputation as a country that can be counted on. There is a growing list of other countries with resources and wealth and skills that are roughly comparable to ours but we sit at the G-8 and we play above our weight because we have been known as a country that respects our obligations and does what we say we will do.

•(1210)

We began to earn that reputation and thus began to earn that distinguishing asset by our military contribution in the first world war and by our military and diplomatic conduct ever since. Beyond that, such common history as Canadians have draws heavily on the record of ordinary men and women from coast to coast to coast

### *Supply*

across all the cultures of Canada to defend with their lives values they thought important. Those were the values of free societies in times of conflict and combat; they were the values of stability in peacekeeping.

In other countries, armies defended territory; they were a home defence. Our military tradition is broader than that. It reflects the reality that Canadian security depends upon larger security, but it has always been ready to defend those larger interests of international security. The willingness to do that is what won our reputation in the world. Our inability to do that under the government is costing Canada our reputation in the world.

Ten years ago when the world considered the range of actions it could take against Saddam Hussein, Canada was at the centre of deliberations at UN headquarters in New York, in London, in Washington and in the Middle East. We punched above our weight and we were treated with the respect that over decades Canada had earned. Now today with the crisis and tensions renewing, Canada is undoubtedly, undeniably on the outside looking in, paying the price for the indifference of the government to military preparedness over the last decade.

[*Translation*]

This is the essence of the issue. Does Canada want to continue the tradition of the Borden, Pearson and Mulroney governments and fully contribute to the development of the international community, or does it want to sink into insignificance and abdicate its responsibilities toward the world that surrounds it?

[*English*]

As my colleague from Saint John has said, we did not casually choose the wording of today's motion. These are precisely the words the Minister of National Defence used when he addressed the Toronto Board of Trade on October 25. The minister said, and I quote:

—it's wrong to continue overstretching our military people and their families...We should be spending more than is currently planned. Indeed, the Canadian Forces need more money simply to continue operating as they are today in a sustainable way.

That was a direct and pointed criticism of the policies of his own government, in the department for which he bears direct responsibility. In any normal government the Prime Minister would have changed the minister immediately or he would have changed the policy immediately. Instead the Prime Minister treats the minister as just another voice in a chat room, expressing opinions but not able to influence policy.

The Prime Minister can ignore his minister and he can ignore the military. However it will be harder to ignore the considered judgment of this House, which is the point of this motion today. Unless this House acts, nothing will happen to help the military before a budget at the earliest or most likely until some time after the review of international policy which the throne speech promised for the end of the mandate, whenever that is.

*Supply*

This is not a parliamentary question of confidence which might bring down the government. On the contrary, it is a focused and specific means for the House of Commons to help the government give effect to changes recommended precisely by the Minister of National Defence. Since his speech, the minister on numerous occasions has assured the House that his observations that the government continues to overstretch our military personnel and his prescription for increased funding beyond what is currently planned are not contrary to government policy.

If that is government policy, it should be acted on. The government should walk the talk. This motion allows the government to honour the commitment of the minister and to offer real and immediate help to the men and women of the Canadian armed forces.

● (1215)

**Mr. Rick Borotsik (Brandon—Souris, PC):** Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the right hon. member for Calgary Centre, and who better to answer this question than a previous minister of foreign affairs and a previous prime minister.

He touched on Canada's inability now to have any influence on world affairs. This is something that I find dramatically lacking, particularly with regard to the policies and positions of this government. Our military is not seen any longer as having any influence in world military actions. For that matter our ability to even take part in some of those actions has been cut back drastically.

Other than just putting money into the military, what should we be doing as a country to bring back the influence that we had prior to 1993? Could the right hon. member for Calgary Centre comment on that?

**Right Hon. Joe Clark:** Mr. Speaker, I will be brief. For one thing, we have to be much more aggressive internationally in the world. We cannot back away from the opportunities and obligations of leadership that await Canada.

I for one, and I am sure many members of the House, shared the shame when at the time of the terrible crisis in the United States the prime minister of this world who was present offering support to Americans was the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom. The Prime Minister of Canada stood back and was not heard from for several days. That has become almost a trademark of the government, a trademark of stepping back from areas of responsibility where traditionally the Government of Canada has led.

Again, we are now pretending to propose a major fund for aid to Africa. We spent millions of dollars on the conference in Kananaskis that proposed the fund. However when we look at the estimates, which are supposed to put actual money in the account, the money is not there. That is the absence of leadership. That is on the diplomatic side.

The point of the debate is that we won our reputation. If members look at the history of Canada, we won our reputation as an international player through the activities of the men and women in the Canadian armed forces in the first world war. That is when Canada became a sovereign nation in the eyes of the world. It has been the service of Canadian men and women in the armed forces,

our diplomats and others that has made Canada such a significant player internationally.

My colleague for Brandon—Souris makes the point again about the current gathering tensions in the world now. These are tensions which require not only the kind of leadership and diplomacy followed by strength, which Canada has traditionally indicated, but also the kind of calm judgment that can prevail in times like this.

The world is hearing from a prime minister on this. They are hearing from the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom. They are not hearing from Canada. In part, the authority of the United Kingdom has to do not simply with the initiative of the prime minister, but with the fact that his country has not let its military down. It has the means to deliver on its commitments. Our country does not. That has to change.

If we are to play a leading role in the world again, we have to invest again to improve the moral and the capacity of the Canadian armed forces.

● (1220)

**Mr. Rob Merrifield (Yellowhead, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my hon. colleague for his comments. As the former member of Parliament for Yellowhead, we served the same people. When I talk with the veterans, who were prepared to go to war to defend this nation, they are very proud of their history. They are very proud of the people who serve in the armed forces right now. They are not very proud with the way they are being treated.

When I look at the shambles we have with the submarines which have just been purchased or when I see, such as I did this weekend, that the helicopters cannot get off the ground, it is very frustrating.

Do we have the same problem with this government with regard to the military as we do with health care? I am the health critic for my party. It has been a culture of neglect over a decade, rather than just more money.

**Right Hon. Joe Clark:** Mr. Speaker, I think the government thinks it learned a lesson that the purpose of government is to stay up in the polls and stay out of trouble. Therefore it backs away from tough decisions and governs by polls.

My colleague for Saint John made the point that the members of the Canadian military were unable to come here and lobby on their behalf as others might. Their absence is taken as silence. Their absence is taken as acquiescence. This is a government that only pays attention only to issues that hit it between the eyes.

What is happening now, and it is a terrible thing for the world but perhaps it will finally change policy toward the military, is that it is no longer possible to ignore the price that Canadians are paying for this decade of neglect of the Canadian military.

A fellow citizen from Calgary and a fellow Albertan, Ms. Adolph, made the point the other day when she—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair):** I am sorry to interrupt the hon. member. Resuming debate, the Minister of National Defence.

**Hon. John McCallum (Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am glad to have this opportunity to speak to the motion before us today. As I have said numerous times since becoming Minister of National Defence, my respect for the Canadian military has never stopped growing, and with that respect has come a growing determination to do what is right for them and for our country.

[*Translation*]

In July, I had the opportunity to meet some of our troops in Afghanistan. I was able to see not only the difficult and dangerous conditions in which they perform their duties, but also the great pride that they derive from their numerous accomplishments. I am convinced that no member of this House has doubts about the quality of our armed forces. I think that we all want to take the appropriate measures for them.

[*English*]

Let us remember that the government announced its intentions to prepare defence for the future in the recent Speech from the Throne. The government has committed to set out a long term direction on international and defence policy, "a policy that reflects our values and interests and ensures that Canada's military is equipped to fulfill the demands placed upon it".

The motion before us today refers to the overstretching of our military personnel. I am well aware that over the past decade the Canadian Forces have been called upon with increasing frequency both at home and abroad. At the same time their overseas missions increased, their personnel numbers decreased. That is why I have stated publicly that the recent pace of operations is not sustainable. It means too much time away from home for too many of our men and women in uniform, with negative implications for morale, family life and general well-being. It is also translates into personnel retention problems. I recognize this, my predecessor recognized this, the leadership of the Canadian Forces recognizes this and we are doing something about it.

For example, we decided not to rotate more ground troops into Afghanistan when the battle group returned from Kandahar. Recently we have drawn down our forces in Bosnia from 1,500 to about 1,300 so our contribution there is still considerable.

Some critics have suggested that by not replacing the battle group in Afghanistan we have reneged on our commitment to the campaign against terrorism. Nothing could be further from the truth. On the navy side, 11 of our ships have been deployed to the Arabian Gulf and Arabian Sea in total, and two of them remain in theatre conducting maritime and leadership interdiction operations. Only last Thursday, one of our ships intercepted a vessel which contained five patrol boats heading for Iraq. Not a bad day's work.

Meanwhile, the air force has deployed Hercules aircraft for strategic and tactical airlift, as well as the Auroras for surveillance operations.

• (1225)

[*Translation*]

So far, the troops that we have deployed during this campaign total over 4,500 men and women from the army, navy and air force.

### *Supply*

The anti-terrorist campaign has an impact on our active military personnel closer to home and Canadian Forces members continue to rigorously defend Canada's airspace, through our NORAD commitment.

Allow me to state that the Canadian Forces continue to excel at fulfilling their commitments in Canada, whether this involves providing assistance following a natural disaster, conducting search and rescue missions, or patrolling our territorial waters.

[*English*]

We are in the final stages of an agreement with our American neighbours that will better position us to respond to major crises, such as terrorist attacks or natural disasters within North America. Specifically, we are in the final stages of negotiating a joint binational planning group that will set up plans and protocols that could be used in times of crisis. This planning group will allow us to share intelligence and contingency plans and clearly identify how to access the resources necessary to respond quickly.

We are not suggesting that we create new command and control structure or assign permanent new forces to these tasks. This new arrangement is all about protecting lives, our lives and the lives of our neighbours to the south. It is about protecting our shared interest.

[*Translation*]

I feel there is no doubt whatsoever that the Canadian Forces continue to honour their commitments both in Canada and elsewhere.

Returning to the matter of our high operational tempo, I repeat that the government has recognized the problem and is in the process of solving it at this time.

Reducing our operational tempo is one part of the solution, but continued investment in enhancing the quality of life for our military personnel and their families is another. We have made considerable progress in that area.

We have, for instance, set up five operational trauma and stress support centres to assist members of the Canadian Forces and family members to cope with stress-related problems and illnesses arising out of military operations.

We have also undertaken a study of the impact of frequent deployments on the military. The study findings will help us to design policies and programs to alleviate the effects of repeated deployments.

In the meantime, we have issued temporary guidelines stipulating that military personnel returning from a deployment overseas or to an isolated region should not be sent on another such posting for 18 months.

*Supply**[English]*

In May 2001 the operational stress injuries social support project was launched in partnership with Veterans Affairs Canada. Its purpose is to develop and establish social support programs for members, veterans and their families who are affected by operational stress injuries and to provide education and training within the Canadian Forces to promote understanding and acceptance of such injuries.

Project staff are working on a national peer support network for members, veterans and their families. They are also working with our military and civilian health care professionals on the validation of educational packages and pre-deployment training modules. They have been given a mandate to work on changing attitudes and perceptions toward operational stress injuries.

These initiatives, together with other quality of life improvements implemented by my predecessor, represent concrete actions taken to invest in our people and their well-being.

We took a new step when the 800 soldiers returned from Afghanistan. They spent a few days in Guam along the way. This was a novel approach that is leading edge. My British counterpart, for example, has asked for information about how we conducted these operations to minimize transit stress related disorders.

While all of this is positive, the problem lies in the fact that some of these improvements in quality of life, which I congratulate my predecessor for implementing, were in part funded from the capital budget. While no one should question the value of the quality of life improvements, clearly we cannot mortgage our future by reducing our capital budget. We need funding for both.

To those who suggest we should spend our money on people but not on equipment, let me remind the House that when we send our men and women in uniform into harm's way, we have a duty to ensure they are well equipped. We have a responsibility to equip them for success.

• (1230)

*[Translation]*

Will we need more funding? The answer to this will likely still be "yes". I have been completely frank in admitting that the Department of National Defence and the Canadian Forces are experiencing major financial constraints.

At the same time, it must be kept in mind that the government has increased its allocations for defence. And the amount is considerable: over \$5 billion more between 2001-02 and 2006-07.

It is my job to see that these additional resources are used in the best way to ensure value for money.

This is the reason I feel it is important for us to examine all potential savings and to invest wisely in the capacity to face the future.

In the interests of the security of Canadian citizens, we must seek to reallocate resources from sectors that are no longer essential to those that will be required in future. We will also ensure that the Canadian Forces become a more modern and more sustainable institution.

*[English]*

I encourage members of the House to avoid dramatic overstatements and fearmongering. Painting the current state of the Canadian Forces in dramatic and even apocalyptic terms is unproductive at best. I hope I have made it clear to the House that as Minister of National Defence I am well aware of the challenges we face in this department. I am committed to working with all parliamentarians and my government colleagues to find solutions to those challenges.

If I take issue with the dramatic way in which the current state of the Canadian Forces is portrayed, including by members of the opposition, it is because this portrayal fails to recognize the tremendous accomplishments of the Canadian Forces in recent years.

There are many good news stories about the Canadian Forces. Let us ensure they are not overlooked by an obsessive focus on the challenges. From Bosnia, East Timor, Sierra Leone, Ethiopia, Eritrea to Afghanistan, the Canadian Forces continue to go where they are needed. They continue to demonstrate the strong sense of duty, courage and professionalism for which they have gained international renown.

I consider it an honour and a privilege to serve as Minister of National Defence. I believe that with the position comes a duty to the people of Canada and to the men and women of the Canadian Forces who dedicate themselves to defending this country. That duty is to ensure that the Canadian Forces remain the multipurpose combat capable force we need to defend Canada and North America, and to make a significant contribution to international peace and security. It is a duty I fully intend to uphold.

**Mr. John Williams (St. Albert, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, it has been noted by the Minister of National Defence how short the military is on funds these days, courtesy of the Liberal government of course. It has hacked and slashed the budget rather than ensure that the military is capable of defending the country.

I noted in the paper or became aware recently that the military has signed a contract for \$703 million with a moving company to move our military over the next four years from here to there and back again, around the country and so on. I recall that back in public accounts we dealt with this issue a number of years ago. At that time the military was spending \$26 million a year on moving personnel around and I thought that was going to be cut back. Some \$703 million over four years works out to about 2% of the military budget spent basically on nothing being accomplished other than moving people around.

Would the minister tell us why he spends this kind of money? Why did he sign that kind of contract? What benefit is there for military personnel, as he acknowledged himself how important it was for military personnel to build a stable family life as well as defend this country?

*Supply*

● (1235)

**Hon. John McCallum:** Mr. Speaker, in general there are quite a number of people to move around the country and around the world in the Canadian Forces. As to the details of this particular contract, I will inquire and get back to the hon. member.

**Right Hon. Joe Clark (Calgary Centre, PC):** Mr. Speaker, there is a growing consensus in the House that there must be a significant change in the amount and speed of spending on national defence. For the purposes of this question I am prepared to take at face value the minister's own commitment to that.

He has taken the unusual step, unprecedented in my judgment, of taking his case public, a case that is normally made around the cabinet table. He has made it public by taking it to the Toronto Board of Trade. We can argue some other time as to what the consequences should be for doing that.

Having taken this unusual step of making the case public, what will happen if he fails and there is not significantly more money in the budget for national defence? If he is unable to deliver upon the fairly dramatic changes that he has advocated in a public forum will he then take the next logical and unusual step of stepping down as Minister of National Defence?

**Hon. John McCallum:** Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the right hon. member would go one step further given the depleted field and suggest that I might run for the leadership of his party, resign and cross the floor?

**An hon. member:** The minister would be all alone.

**Hon. John McCallum:** I think that is my answer.

**Right Hon. Joe Clark:** Mr. Speaker, the minister will get into some trouble with his flippant remarks. I have asked a serious question. He has gone on public record urging significant changes in the policy of the department for which he reports to the House of Commons. If he is unable to achieve those changes, which he believes are necessary, will he do the honourable thing and step aside as minister?

**Hon. John McCallum:** Mr. Speaker, rule number one in politics is that sometimes it is not a good idea to answer hypothetical questions. I would take that question to be entirely hypothetical.

**Mr. Rick Casson (Lethbridge, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, a number of issues have been raised in the presentation so far, but one of the things that the minister himself conceded to a few weeks ago was a review of the whole operation and structure of the military. He indicated that needed to be done and he would start to do that.

Will he tell Canadians who will conduct that review. How will they be selected? What will the mandate be? When will the review be launched? When it is completed, will the House be presented with that report and will all Canadians understand what needs to be done within the structure of our military?

**Hon. John McCallum:** Mr. Speaker, as I said in my speech I plan to appoint a small number of individuals with private sector expertise in restructuring and to have those individuals work as a team with individuals within the Department of National Defence to address the issue of how we can achieve a greater efficiency of savings in the

budget, not in terms of military capabilities because these people are civilians, but in terms of administrative efficiency.

I do not have the names of those individuals yet. We are still working on how this will be done in precise terms. However I anticipate being able to make an announcement on this topic within a month. It would be my hope that these individuals would report back to me within six months. I will then inform the House and the public as to the outcome of this report.

**Mr. Peter MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough, PC):** Mr. Speaker, it is with some sadness to hear the minister say that he has to go outside the current military ranks to get that kind of expertise, but my question is more to the point.

The reductions in personnel have been a direct spinoff effect of having the budget slashed, along with the denigration and the moral problems that exist. No one is pointing these out with any pleasure. We do not relish the fact that we have to point these out to the minister. I am sure he is painfully aware that one question is riveting the minds of Canadians and I am sure military personnel, particularly the men and women who fly our decrepit Sea Kings that came into effect at the same time as the current Prime Minister in 1963, and currently limit our ability to patrol and ensure the security of both the east and west coasts, and our military presence in the north.

Will it take the Prime Minister's retirement in the year 2004 before the government will finally stop playing silly buggers over this issue and finally order these helicopters, so that men and women in the armed forces are not putting their lives at risk every time they go up and do their duties in 40 year old aircraft? Is that the position of the minister? When can we expect that those helicopters will be ordered and when will we take delivery?

● (1240)

**Hon. John McCallum:** Mr. Speaker, I have flown in a Sea King and I can assure the hon. member that it is not a safety issue. I know it is deeply imbedded in the culture of the military that it does not allow its people to go up in unsafe equipment. It is true, however, that as the equipment gets older, the proportion of the time that is devoted to maintenance does go up.

In terms of the timing of the new helicopter, as I have said in the House on a number of occasions, this is clearly one of my top priorities. It is not a simple matter. We have received from industry over 1,000 recommendations concerning specification changes. I acknowledge that there has been some slippage but I am determined to get the right helicopter at the lowest possible price as soon as possible.

**Mr. Monte Solberg (Medicine Hat, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, in the minister's remarks he acknowledged that the Canadian military is not getting adequate funding today. He pointed out that the leadership of the military has acknowledged that, but when will the Prime Minister and the cabinet acknowledge that?

### *Supply*

The minister laid out some of the problems today with the Canadian military, as well as applauding some of its efforts. He provided absolutely no strategy for finding resources outside of internal shuffling to address some of the problems he has raised. What is his strategy to get more money at the cabinet table to ensure that Canadian men and women are properly resourced when they are asked to put their lives on the line?

**Hon. John McCallum:** Mr. Speaker, I have addressed this question several times. I understand that there is a budget coming up and that different ministers will be making different budgetary proposals. I understand that there are many competing demands and priorities. At the end of the day the government will decide which of those priorities to put first, second or third.

I will be making an application and presenting it to cabinet. I will be asking for some additional resources. I will be offering up some internal savings to supplement those new additional resources, but at the end of the day it is the government, at the time of the budget, that will make its budgetary decisions.

**Mrs. Elsie Wayne (Saint John, PC):** Mr. Speaker, the Auditor General and defence analysts have suggested that the operations budget of the CF faces severe shortfalls. The minister has agreed that there is a need. He stated it unequivocally when he spoke to the Toronto Board of Trade.

I am sure the minister knows whether or not the members of his cabinet are supporting him or not. Can we get money into the next budget for the military so we can look after not just Sea Kings, submarines and everything else, but ensuring that military personnel have the quality of life they need?

**Hon. John McCallum:** Mr. Speaker, with respect to quality of life, I have on a number of occasions paid tribute to my predecessor because he made quality of life of the military his number one priority. Over the five years in which he was in office there were substantial improvements in pay levels, in health care, as I described in my speech, and in many other areas.

That being said, I have acknowledged many times that there are stresses and strains. My predecessor acknowledged it. The military has acknowledged it. As I said in answer to the previous question, I am indeed putting forward an application for new resources and at the end of the day the government will make the decision.

• (1245)

**Mr. Monte Solberg (Medicine Hat, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to rise and address the motion today. I will be splitting my time with the member for Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke.

The world is a dangerous place and has been since the beginning of time. Unfortunately I think the Liberal government across the way forgot that. I think at some point it decided that perhaps the United Nations was going to fix everything and that a strong and vital Canadian military was no longer important.

Sadly, that meant that whenever there was any kind of budget crunch the first place the government turned to was the Canadian military. We have seen spending drop like a stone when it comes to providing proper resources to the Canadian military. That is a sad thing for a couple of reasons.

First, the world is a dangerous place. We do need to have a Canadian military that can not only protect the shores of this country but also can fulfill its international obligations and its obligations to our allies to protect them in times of trouble, and sadly we have seen a lot of trouble in the last year. Of course we had 9/11. We had the recent attack Bali in which we lost a couple of Canadians and also over 100 Australians, good friends of ours. We have seen other terrorist attacks around the world, in Yemen, Kuwait and the Philippines.

The world is a very dangerous place and we need to ensure that we start to put resources into our military so that we can prevent the types of disasters that have occurred in those countries. We also need to have credibility when we go out as a country that has been a conscience in the world to some degree. The only way we can do that is to walk softly and carry a big stick. Unfortunately, the government has allowed the military in Canada to diminish to such a degree that I do not think we speak with the same authority that we used to on issues of foreign affairs.

More to the point, it is dangerous to our troops when they are not adequately resourced. Some very specific things have occurred in our past that have put our troops in danger. I remember very well the Canadian Alliance raising in the House the instance in Croatia where a soldier suffered brain damage after a troop carrier rolled over, because we could not afford enough helmets. That is an example of some of the problems we have.

This summer I was privileged to go to Wainwright to engage in training with the PPCLI, the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry, in anticipation of their going to Bosnia. We went out there and did some weapons training. They told me that the military does not supply them with adequate ammunition to practise with, yet they are asked to go to dangerous places in the world, like Afghanistan, like Bosnia, which is not as dangerous now as it was a while ago, without adequate ammunition to practise with in this case. We know for instance that they did not have proper uniforms when they went to Afghanistan. That is a serious issue. The government tried to brush it off at the time, saying that it was no big deal, but their lives were on the line. It is a serious issue. It is not something that the government can simply brush off.

I am encouraged to hear that the minister is starting to come to the conclusion that maybe there is a problem. First he denied there was a problem and said that people were misguided for raising the issue of lack of adequate resources. A couple of days later he changed his tune. I do not know whether he is confused or is simply coming to his senses. The point is that we cannot just talk about this any more. We have to do something to start to put resources into Canada's military.

I am privileged to have a military base in my riding, CFB Suffield. I admire very much the various commanding officers we have had through that base and what they have tried to do with limited resources. They are very good people. They are outstanding people.



I also get to see the British military train there. As the right hon. member for Calgary Centre said, the British government has put resources into its military, so when Britain stands up on the world stage and says something, people listen. We do not have that in Canada any more. For too long the military has been a whipping boy whenever there is a budget crunch. We see it again and again.

• (1250)

The auditor general points to a \$6 billion shortfall in the capital budget. The minister just admitted a few minutes ago that the government took money out of the capital budget to put into quality of life for the soldiers. That is fine. It was, I suppose, well-intentioned, but we are no better off now. We are worse off when it comes to the capital budget, with a \$430 million shortfall in the supplementary estimates this year. We are billions short of where we need to be.

Before members on the other side jump up and say that the Canadian Alliance wants to have its cake and eat it too, that it wants tax cuts, that it wants higher spending for health care, let me say that we argue, and I know that my colleague the Minister of National Defence, an economist, knows this, that there is tremendous waste in government. There are things that occur in government that are actually counterproductive to economic growth. I know he acknowledges that in his heart of hearts even if he will not acknowledge it here. That is where the cutting has to occur.

In Canada, where we claim to be concerned about peace, order and good government, we should be putting resources into peace and order but we are not. Right now in Canada military funding is 30% lower than it was in real terms when the government came to power and I can also argue that the world is 100% more dangerous than it was nine years ago when the government came to power. Resources have gone down substantially and then up slightly, to be fair, but they are nowhere near where they need to be. We urge the government to get that message.

I would be remiss if I did not say a word about the reserves. I have the South Alberta Light Horse in my riding. It is a great unit, a great regiment, with a long history. Its ancestry dates back almost 100 years now. In case people do not understand the reserve system, these are people who spend their weekends and many days when they can get away from work in preparing in the event that they are called upon to engage in active duty, but I do not know how many times I have heard about the following from reservists. In one case someone came to me and said he got on the bus to go on a course and was hauled us off the bus and told there was no money for the course. This happens time after time after time.

These people are completely dedicated to the service of their country. There is very little in it for them monetarily. They do it because they believe in their country. When is their country going to believe in them? When is the government going to believe in them? I would like to see it happen. It is time to put some resources into the reserves in Canada for these people who are really committed to this country.

There are so many things that we could talk about. My friend mentioned the Sea Kings. It is a disgrace. With great respect to the minister, his answer does not hold water. We know that Sea Kings fall out of the sky all too frequently because they are too old. After

### *Supply*

40 years, they are too old to fix, even with frequent servicing. They are dangerous. They need to be replaced. The government did the country a disservice when it cancelled the EH-101s contract with no plan to provide helicopters to replace them. That was completely wrong.

I have to say a word about rotation. The minister touched on it and good for him, but it is a serious issue. When I spent a week with the soldiers at Wainwright this year, some of the warrants there were going back to Bosnia for the fifth time in 10 years. If they have families and children and are going back for another six month roto, as they call it, for the fifth time in 10 years, that can have devastating effects on their families and it frequently does. It is one of the reasons why we are losing some of our best, most experienced people from the Canadian military.

It is time for the government to recognize the human toll. Apart from just the danger they are put in, the danger that they possibly may face due to lack of resources, there is also a human toll. We have to begin to understand that and start to address it and, I am afraid to say, it can be addressed only by putting adequate resources into the Canadian military. That is not happening.

• (1255)

I know I do not have much time left so in essence I will end where I began when I questioned the minister. I am not certain that the minister has an adequate plan to address this. We know that there are huge demands in the country for all kinds of funding, for health care for instance, and for other high priority items like higher education and those sorts of things. I am not certain that the defence minister has even yet rallied the support in his caucus that is necessary to push the government to put those resources into the Canadian military. My time is up so I will simply say that is the minister's challenge. I hope he will find a way to meet it.

**Mr. John O'Reilly (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I listened with great interest to the member's remarks. I know that he has a base in his riding and I want to just have him expand a little on his comments about our international commitment. I think that right now we have close to 4,000 people involved around the world in various places, in Operation Apollo and also in Bosnia and other areas. With between 3,700 and 4,000 people currently out of the country on operations, we have Aurora aircraft, ships and other commitments around the world. I just wondered about that when the member said we are not meeting our international commitments. I believe we are and I would like to know what more he expects us to be able to do.

*Supply*

I do not want to sound negative, because I think we are all singing from the same songbook. I certainly want to congratulate the member for Saint John for bringing this forward. It is a very opportune time. I think there is a change in the air. We always say in our caucus, particularly those of us who sit on the defence committee, "do not walk by the Minister of Finance without asking him about military spending". The opposition can also play a role in that. However, I am more interested in just what he feels our international commitment should be.

**Mr. Monte Solberg:** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question and the tone of the question. Maybe the best way to put this is to say that Canada makes commitments around the world and I think we do a good job. I do not deny that, but my point is that historically Canada was a leader in the world in providing troops to trouble spots and we did more than our share. As a result, we had more than our share of weight when it came to foreign affairs. I think that our reputation has been diminished by our inability to answer the call in the last number of years.

When we do answer the call, what happens is that we get responses like the one we got from the current finance minister and Deputy Prime Minister who says that we are victims of our own success. The finance minister can do that for one year and maybe two years, but he cannot do it for ten or fifteen years without causing morale problems in the Canadian military for people who are deeply committed to their country. They want to do a good job but they cannot continually put their families and their lives at risk knowing that the Canadian government is not prepared to provide them with adequate resources.

**Mr. Peter MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough, PC):** Mr. Speaker, I commend my friend the hon. member for Medicine Hat on his remarks. I think he has very recent experience, having been on an army base and having done some training and experienced first-hand some of the difficulties and challenges.

I too want to bring this back to some facts and statistics that are important to keep in mind. The hon. member has done a great deal of work on the finance committee and would know that in the period of time since 1993 \$7 billion has been taken out of defence spending. He would know that there are 18,000 fewer members of the Canadian armed forces and 10,000 fewer reservists over that same period of time of approximately 10 years.

My colleague the parliamentary secretary asked what more could we do. The Auditor General is saying that the current budgetary allowances are \$1.3 billion short in terms of what is actually needed. With 40 year old Sea King helicopters and 30 year old frigates, the equipment itself is putting people at risk. Yet there are also domestic circumstances for which we need to bolster our armed forces. We know what happened with the floods in Manitoba and with the ice storm.

Does the hon. member feel that the current status of the Canadian armed forces is sufficient to perform even the domestic role that is required of the forces, let alone our international obligations?

• (1300)

**Mr. Monte Solberg:** Mr. Speaker, in a way it is the curse of being a great country like Canada that we need a large military. The land mass of Canada is huge. Not only do we need a vigorous military to

ensure we can patrol our borders, which are expansive because we have so much coastline for instance, but we also have natural disasters. The Canadian military has often been called upon to help out during disasters and it always does a fantastic job.

Here is something a lot of people do not realize. When those soldiers helped out in Winnipeg and during the ice storm where did the money come from? It came directly out of the military budget. No money was forthcoming from general revenues to help out. This left the military much less capable to provide proper resources, proper funding for pay and all those kinds of things, at that time to ensure that the military was well looked after in doing its primary job, which was and is to protect the country and fulfil our international obligations.

**Mrs. Cheryl Gallant (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, as we approach Remembrance Day it is fitting for the House to devote the debate today to the sad neglect of our military, which has become the hallmark of this government's defence policy.

It is indeed sad that the Prime Minister is always quick to take credit for the work of the Canadian men and women who, as members of the Canadian armed forces during peacekeeping missions, clearing snow in Toronto or helping the people of Manitoba during the floods, perform their tasks faithfully and well.

It is the same Prime Minister who refuses to listen to members of his own party, the military, the public and our allies who state that the Canadian military is in crisis.

The federal government has always focused debate on military equipment. It knows that by focusing debate on expensive, new military equipment it can divide the public over the need to modernize the Canadian military. This tactic of divide and conquer has masked the reality of the policy of neglect.

I will focus my remarks on the true casualties of the Liberal government policy to underfund the military, the people. The women and men who work in our military, either in uniform or in the many support roles as civilian defence employees, have been fighting a slow, losing war of attrition that has moved morale to an all time low in our armed forces.

As a member of the Standing Committee on National Defence and Veterans Affairs, on more than one occasion I have listened to witnesses from the government talk about the need to improve the quality of life for Canadian Forces members and their families.

The reality, and I refer to the April 2002 report of the Auditor General, is that the Canadian armed forces has been reduced to some 52,300 trained and effective members, with another 5,300 not yet trained and others on medical leave or retirement leave or were unavailable for administrative or disciplinary reasons. As well, some 3,300 positions at the time of the Auditor General's report were vacant.

Based on those audited numbers, the Auditor General concluded that there were not enough trained and effective personnel in the Canadian armed forces to meet occupational demands with the effective trained strength having dropped eight percentage points in one decade.

What does that mean to the men and women who are currently serving? On any given day approximately 8,000 Canadian Forces members, or one-third of our deployable force, are either preparing for, engaged in or returning from an overseas mission. If one takes the numbers, almost one-half, 45% of our Canadian armed forces are not available for deployment.

Just to demonstrate the way our military is being mismanaged, out of 52,300 members, Canada has 8,500 forces members at Ottawa headquarters with no base to run.

Canada is committed to more and more peacekeeping missions and fewer people are available for deployments. While some forces members have seen five, six or seven overseas missions, we have Canadian Forces members with 15 or 20 years of service who have never been deployed overseas, yet at Ottawa headquarters members still dress in battle fatigues every day and walk to work with a briefcase.

This has placed an almost unbearable strain on serving members who are expected to wade out into the fray of some civil war in some far off country and then come home to life as usual.

What has become abundantly clear to the men and women on the frontlines is that it is not life as usual when they return from an overseas assignment.

In the past, mechanisms existed to support the soldier. The regiment looked after its own. That does not happen to the same degree as it did in the past as it is now Liberal policy to dismantle the regimental system.

The base community that once existed is being torn apart by the government policy decision to increase base rents to the point that families are forced off the bases into the general community that in too many cases is not equipped to deal with the special needs of military families, particularly those military families that have to deal with the stress of separation from loved ones for longer and longer periods of time as it takes for those individuals to resume their family life.

• (1305)

Family resource centres on military bases across Canada are reporting increased levels of crisis intervention. Death rates and, more worrisome, suicide rates are skyrocketing as the government buries its head in the sand over the stress and strain it is placing on Canadian Forces members.

It is no secret that since the Princess Patricia's returned from Afghanistan a record number of soldiers have applied to leave the military. This in turn will put increased pressure on those individuals who remain in the service.

The other great tragedy is the push to put Canadian Forces members in unsafe conditions because they do not have the proper equipment to do the job. Unlike the rest of us, if we were placed in an unsafe working condition we could say no. For a member who is serving in the military, saying no is a career decision.

While the Liberal Party makes a political football out of the need to replace the 40 year old Sea King helicopters, we remember Major Bob Henderson, a father of three, and Major Wally Sweetman, who

### *Supply*

died at the controls of their Sea King helicopter, burned alive after making an emergency landing that saved the lives of the other two crewmen who managed to scramble to safety before they too were engulfed in flames from the burning helicopter.

I will quote from retired Canadian Forces fighter pilot Laurie Hawn who wrote to the Prime Minister last year saying that she hoped for the military's sake that his legacy would not be bloodstained by the loss of loyal air crews in the Sea King during the years they should have been serving us in their new aircraft.

The legacy is also bloodstained with the deaths of Captain Colin Sonoski, who the people in my riding of Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke remember during the time he was stationed at Canadian Forces Petawawa, and Captain Juli-Ann Mackenzie who died piloting a CH-146 Griffon helicopter. They died on the evening of July 18 this year during a search and rescue mission they should have never been called out on.

The Griffon helicopter is basically a commercial helicopter painted green. There are currently 98 Griffons in use in the Canadian armed forces and of that number 9 are being used in search and rescue, primarily as combat assistants.

In the case of the 444 combat squadron, it was to support the allied training program. The two young pilots, Captain Sonoski and Captain Mackenzie were called out because the proper search and rescue helicopters were not available.

Those are just a few of the examples of the policy of neglect that has characterized the Liberal Party's mistreatment of our military and the incredible burden it is placing on the men and women who serve in our military.

In the September 2001 budget, the government announced \$396 million to be allocated to the Office of Critical Infrastructure Protection and Emergency Preparedness in response to the tragic events of September 11.

How did the Department of National Defence respond to this influx of cash to DND for this particular purpose of preparing Canadians for emergencies? Did the money go to fulfilling previous promises, some made by the government as recently as 1997 by the previous defence minister to upgrade the Emergency Preparedness College in Arnprior, an institution that had been operating in that community since 1942? No. The first thing to happen was the creation of more bureaucracy and in this case a new associate deputy minister by the name of Margaret Purdy.

What was Margaret Purdy's first act as new associate deputy minister? Arnprior was not good enough, not grand enough for her. She immediately set out to build a bureaucratic empire in Ottawa. For her way of thinking, why not. Let us spend the \$396 million on buildings and expense accounts and who knows what else to build an empire.

*Supply*

What about the staff of the college and the people of Arnprior? When was the department going to let them know about their jobs? They were not going to let them know. Once again a decision was made in which the people at the Department of National Defence are run over roughshod at the expense of the safety and security of all Canadians.

It is not good enough to talk about military issues only in the time that leads up to November 11, Remembrance Day. My wish is that the new Minister of National Defence, a thankless job if ever there was one, will keep faith with those whom we remember on November 11, as well as those who are currently serving as members of Canada's Forces.

• (1310)

**Mr. John O'Reilly (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the member for Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke on her speech. Also, having accompanied her to Bosnia, I know she has a great interest in the military. I am glad she finally has seen the light on the spending because it was not that long ago that the former leader of the opposition of her party indicated in *Hansard* in 1995 that he did not intend to dispute any cuts that were made to the military. His party even went further. The chair of the public accounts committee indicated it wanted to cut a billion from the defence budget in the taxpayers' budget of the party.

I take this opportunity to congratulate the Alliance Party. Obviously its road to Damascus has had many turns. However it now is calling on the government to spend about \$9 billion extra on various things and I look forward to its conversion to military spending.

In 1998 the leader of the opposition indicated that he would hold the line on defence spending. I am very pleased that we are now are all singing from the same book. That is wonderful and I want to congratulate the member on her conversion to increasing military spending. Could she tell us how much she thinks the military budget should be increased and for what it should be used?

**Mrs. Cheryl Gallant:** Mr. Speaker, it is me who must congratulate the parliamentary secretary for defence for seeing the light and becoming converted because along the Canadian Alliance has been demanding more spending on our military.

For several years we said we need an immediate injection of \$2 billion, as well as an increase proportional to the gross domestic product. We had that put forth in a report that was unanimously endorsed with the exception of the Bloc. We have yet to see the response from the government and the increases.

I am looking forward to the Minister of National Defence coming to committee with a case presentation and his outline asking specifically for more spending and where it would go.

• (1315)

**Mrs. Betty Hinton (Kamloops, Thompson and Highland Valleys, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague made a very strong case that more funding for the Canadian Forces is long overdue. The Canadian Alliance has been highlighting this issue for years, contrary to what was said earlier. The Alliance is also a very strong proponent of more responsible and effective spending in all areas of government.

Could I hear my colleague's views on the need for better spending in the Department of National Defence?

**Mrs. Cheryl Gallant:** Mr. Speaker, there have been many cases of waste and misplaced priorities in the Department of National Defence and I thank my colleague for the opportunity to outline a few of the worst examples.

We start with the two new Challenger jets to fly the Prime Minister and cabinet ministers around. They were paid out of DND funds, even though the department itself advised that there were no problems with the existing aircraft.

Given the difficulty the military has had in keeping its 40-year-old Sea Kings and Hercules transport planes in the air and the problems that have been identified with the CF-18 fleet, the Challenger jet purchase is an example of Liberal ministers putting their own comfort ahead of the safety and effectiveness of Canadians troops. The unnecessary jets are being purchased from where? Bombardier, a huge Liberal donor.

It seems like the Liberals are raiding the military budget for their own political benefit which is shameful. This is part of a trend. The government gave another \$65 million to Bombardier in the last two years for pilot training that was never received. It is a 20 year program so obviously something has to be done to ensure that hundreds of millions of dollars more are not wasted over the next 18 years.

This year DND has run up a budget shortfall of \$439 million, of which \$64 million has been spent on rentals. When we consider that every time the Canadian Forces deploys overseas, or even within Canada in the case of the ice storm and the Red River flood, it has to rent transport aircraft and cargo ships. It makes one wonder whether we would have saved any money if we had purchased the equipment ourselves.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Claude Bachand (Saint-Jean, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today and comment on the motion moved by our friends in the Progressive Conservative Party and provide the Bloc Québécois' position. Each time a motion is presented before us, we as legislators must put things in context and ask ourselves about overall priorities.

As legislators we are called to vote on a number of different issues here in the House, including those related to national defence, but also on all of the federal government's responsibilities. In the current context, we are being asked to increase funding for National Defence.

This morning, I was looking at a study done by the Canadian Council on Social Development. According to the study, there has been a dramatic increase in the number of children living in poverty in Canada since 1989. I would like to remind the House that in 1989, the government said it would solve this problem once and for all. In fact, the number of poor children in Canada has risen steadily since 1989. Many people may say that this has nothing to do with the issue that we are discussing today; however, as legislators, we must realize that if we put more money into one area, other areas suffer. This is the kind of choice we must routinely make.

*Supply*

If I were to ask parents of poor families if they thought there was more need for money in the form of transfers to the provinces, rather than for National Defence, I am sure that 90% of them would say, "We want help. We believe that National Defence is less important". This is what polls indicate.

I do not mean to say that there are not needs at National Defence. I have been the defence critic for two years now, and I am fully aware of the department's needs. However, when it comes to voters—those watching us from home, or listening from work—polling indicates that when we ask them if this spending is necessary, they do not think that it is. Voters would rather we solve the problems with employment insurance and the premiums they have to pay. They do not think they should have to pay so much, but that would mean less money for the government. There are always choices to make.

They are calling for more money, but the cabinet is reticent to give more money for National Defence. I would say to the government that if it stopped interfering in areas of provincial jurisdiction and looked after its own areas of jurisdiction, it would have an easier time finding money.

If we look at this government's interference with the millennium scholarships, and in Quebec, with the Canadian flags, the Minister of Canadian Heritage inundating Quebec Canadian flags, not to mention the sponsorship scandal, there are costs involved. The government is handing out substantial amounts to its friends, especially in Quebec. I think that 70% of the money invested in the sponsorships was designed to convince Quebecers of how great the federal system is. If the government spent less on invading provincial jurisdictions, and investing it in exclusively federal areas, its own jurisdictions, perhaps we would not need to have this kind of debate here.

Moving to the political component of national defence. The current defence policy has been in place since 1994. The fundamental question we must ask ourselves is: can we afford to do everything? When I say "everything", the white paper on defence was clear. It mentioned three or four very important missions. I think the international role ought to be maintained. Participating in peace-keeping missions is important, and it is Canada's role to meet such international obligations.

There are many ways of ensuring the defence of this country. The navy defends the country through maritime patrols; the air force defends the country through NORAD and through airspace control over North America. Disaster relief is also very important in this country. I think for example of what happened in the Lac-Saint-Jean area, or in my own riding during the ice storm. We were proud and relieved to see Canadian troops come and lend a hand when we needed them.

But when we look at the overall mission of DND, we can wonder how many more billions would be necessary. I will remind hon. members that in response to a question I put to him last week regarding the use that would be made of the money, the Minister of Defence candidly said he did not know yet what exactly it would be used for.

● (1320)

I agree that there is a lot to do. There are many gaps to plug, because it is true that things are not going well at the Department of National Defence. However, it is a matter of priority.

Where are we going to invest? If we give an additional \$2 billion or \$3 billion to the Minister of National Defence, where exactly is that money going to go? Where are we going to begin to plug the gaps?

I fully agree that the Department of National Defence does not have enough money. Just think about the navy. At present, and this is no joke, there are ships that cannot put out to sea simply because there is a shortage of seamen. These ships remain in the ports, they cannot leave because there are not enough seamen in the Canadian Navy.

As for the air force, in 1994, the Department of National Defence said that it was important to take part in the defence of Canada's air space. At the time, 120 F-18s were bought. Now, we will be left with 80, because there is not enough money to maintain 120. Worse still, the F-18s that are being mothballed will be cannibalized. This means that some components will be removed from them and installed on other aircraft. As we can see, the air force is also experiencing problems.

Similarly, everyone agrees that the army is also running out of energy. I can personally attest to that, because I had the honour of spending time with the Royal 22nd Regiment last year. I spent time in Bosnia with members of that regiment. This was a unique opportunity to talk to soldiers and officers. These people are running out of energy. They leave on far away missions, for long periods of time. The core of the issue is the frequency of these postings.

From 1960 to 1980, I believe there were about 20 international missions. Since then, there have been close to 80. These people are sent abroad for six months, they come back home for a short period of time and then they are sent back again, often on a peacekeeping mission or on a more aggressive operation, such as the one in Afghanistan. So, it is obvious that the army also has a problem.

Lastly, the demand is virtually endless. The Americans invest some \$400 billion yearly in defence, while Canada, a country ten times smaller, invests some \$11.8 billion. Proportionately speaking, the equivalent for Canada might be \$40 billion for National Defence. Obviously, however, public opinion might well be opposed to that. A jump from \$11.8 billion to \$40 billion is barely feasible; it would mean close to 25% of the budget for National Defence. That is absolutely impossible.

Some policy decisions will have to be made, therefore. At the moment, the government is being faulted for making policy choices on a case by case basis. When some disaster arises and some need absolutely has to be met, then the reaction is "we'll put some money there" and then they shuffle the financial deck again at National Defence, with its \$11.8 billion budget.

### Supply

We feel that this ad hoc method can no longer be continued, because it is a bottomless pit. Before investing any more money, Quebeckers and Canadians need to be asked what they expect of the army. In the end, it is the taxpayers who decide. It is not up to the member for Saint John, the member for Halifax, or the member for Calgary East. Nor is it up to the Minister of National Defence alone.

It must be understood, once and for all, that in a democratic system the citizen is the one who pays the bills. It is the people working today, those who see on their cheque stubs on a Friday that they have paid so many hundreds or thousands to the government. They are the ones to decide what kind of army they want in Canada.

The government, however, has a responsibility to tell them "This is how we see it" and to submit various scenarios to them. The public can then react and say "We, as taxpayers, think that makes sense." This is not often done. The only things the taxpayer sees written up in the newspapers are scandals.

Speaking of scandals, I would invite the minister to exercise greater control over his department. There are scandals. This morning, we learned that \$8.5 million was spent to send submariners to England to learn how to operate submarines.

As for those submarines, that is a whole other matter. We purchased old British submarines. Personally, I do not believe that *Victoria* class submarines can be considered the latest. These are old British submarines and we have had all sorts of problems with them. Every time they go out to sea, they have to come back to dry dock for repairs.

• (1325)

We may wonder, with respect to a new National Defence policy, if we need submarines. This is a significant expense for the department. The problem is that decisions are being made based on the white paper from 1994, and a great deal has changed in the past 8 years, particularly since the events of September 11.

Everything has changed. Even the Canadian army's special forces are evolving, which was not the case in 1994, because they did not yet exist back then. They did exist, but very minimally. In 1994, Canada's armed forces were viewed quite differently from the way they should be viewed today. For these reasons, I wonder if we really should be proceeding on a case by case basis.

There is also the whole debate about specialization. This is something that is even being debated at NATO. I will be accompanying the minister to Prague in two weeks, and I thank him for the opportunity. Clearly we cannot ask Lithuania or Estonia, which are small countries, to make as big a contribution as the United States, whose NATO contribution exceeds everyone else's. We cannot ask that of them.

More and more people are asking, "Could we not specialize"? Similarly, we could ask ourselves this legitimate question in Canada. Could we not specialize in certain areas?

There are many options and, unfortunately, decisions are made on a case by case basis. When something happens, we say, "We must invest here, so let us cut there". But, if Canadian voters had a choice, it should be the government's legitimate choice. The government should listen to the taxpayers and challenge the idea that the

Canadian Forces must do everything. Do we need this many ships to patrol three oceans? Do we need submarines capable of patrolling under the polar ice cap? We must not forget this is what they will be used for as well. Do the Canadian Forces still need tanks? Will there ever be another war in which Russian tanks will face American and Canadian tanks? We could ask ourselves this kind of questions.

The military doctrine has changed. Many things have changed. Do we still need as many F-18s to patrol Canadian airspace and North American airspace? These are questions we must ask ourselves. There may be many people who disagree with the minister.

As regards the army—and this is very good for that force—people have a great deal of respect for what we call peacekeeping missions. They are somewhat less impressed by aggressive missions, such as in Afghanistan. There is unquestionably a sense of pride, and if we ask these troops to take part in an aggressive mission, they will certainly do so. It is their job. They are capable of doing it, even though their turn comes again very quickly.

As regards peacekeeping missions, most Canadians agree that this is one of our areas of specialization, even though Canada may now rank 30 in terms of what we contribute to such missions.

However, Canadians, and particularly Quebeckers, are much more peaceful and they have no problems with peacekeeping missions. They would be prepared to say "We will regularly take part in peacekeeping missions". This is one type of specialization. This may require a reallocation of resources from one area to another. It may also require a budget increase.

If the government explains very clearly to voters the reason why it is asking for a budget increase, and if it is for a legitimate reason and the public agrees, then the minister could legally and legitimately go forward. However, this is not what is happening. The government is using a piecemeal approach. If we must send troops to Iraq tomorrow, resources may be taken from elsewhere, as was done in the past, including from fixed assets or future projects.

I want to go back to another very important example. I am referring to Sea King helicopters. As regards replacement, they actually made two calls for tenders: one for the platform and one for the integrated system. For the benefit of those who are listening to us on television, it is as if one said "I will order a Chrysler, but I will put a Ford system in it".

• (1330)

According to current studies, this will cost \$400 million more and a number of companies say they are not sure it will work. Certain things that have happened within the department as a result need looking carefully into by the minister.

I have already referred to the \$8.5 million for the people to learn about submarine operation in England. Then there is the \$400 million for helicopters, and I am sure there are other places at DND where the minister could put things in order a bit.

Before getting involved in any kind of injection of cash, it is important that the House of Commons form some idea of what the voters want. Once choices have been made, the government will be able to say what the cost will be and how it will move its money around in order to respect the public's wishes. That is how things need to be looked at. It is up to the public to decide what kind of society they want to have.

The conclusion, in my opinion, is obvious. If the 200,000 families living in poverty were asked whether they agreed with investing in the armed forces, or would rather see transfer payments to the provinces make their lives easier, I think they would opt for the latter.

The government will have the very weighty responsibility of submitting things to the taxpayers that will gain their approval, and get them saying "Yes, I agree with paying for that". After, when the government goes ahead, the taxpayers' reaction will be "We got value for money, and we are very pleased. That is what we want our army to be like".

Certainly, the government will have to make some strong arguments. Like it or not, national defence is not high on people's list of priorities. If the government wants to improve that, it will have to explain the kind of army it wants, listen to the public, and then take steps to ensure that those views are reflected in what it does with the Canadian Forces.

I will be pleased to respond to questions from my colleagues. I trust that I have made a worthwhile contribution to this debate.

• (1335)

**Mr. André Harvey (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, allow me to begin by thanking my hon. colleague from the Bloc Québécois for his remarks. I think he touched on a number of things that are absolutely true. He said, among other things, that everyone in every sector is asking for more money. I agree with him on that. Unfortunately, the way representations are made verges on demagoguery at times and is not always truthful.

To illustrate this point, at present, there is an ad campaign across the country, including in Quebec, naturally. It has been going on for several months. This campaign deals with health care needs. Its purpose is to demand funding for health care from the Canadian government. This obviously concerns everyone. But these ads state that the federal government is putting in only 14 cents on every dollar. The truth is more like 40 cents.

The hon. member was quite right in what he said about the defence sector. There is much talk about rationalizing health care. We are told that, before reinvesting massively, it might be a good idea to go through a rationalization process, to take a closer look at how things are being managed. There are other sectors where the figures and the demands do not always match. References were made to fiscal imbalance.

With regards to the Canadian federation and the Canadian government, I think that most provinces benefit from belonging to the country. This is the case for all of the provinces; it is true for Quebec. We receive several billion dollars as a result of our

### *Supply*

investment in the federation. This is because the federal framework benefits all of the provinces, but to various degrees.

Other demands are being made. Among them, there is the issue of parental leave. There are provinces, Quebec in particular, who want money. They received it in the area of labour training. They asked to take over this area for 30 years. Five years ago, labour training was transferred. The federal government gives Quebec \$600 million per year, and we receive a great many complaints.

By and large, I believe that my colleague is right when he says that we need to look into what the Canadian forces should be doing.

I would like to ask him if he is aware that our Minister of National Defence, to whom I tip my hat, is already taking part in consultations through a variety of mechanisms, including a special one on the web site? There are also consultations with a number of major stakeholders here in Canada. That is my question.

**Mr. Claude Bachand:** Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his question. I do not want to spend too much time discussing with him the issue of health and parental leave, because I do not share his opinion, and nor do all the members of the Quebec National Assembly and all the provinces of Canada, since they all feel that there is a fiscal imbalance.

However, as regards the last part of his question on a consultation process by the Department of National Defence, I am aware of the existence of a web site and of the fact that the minister will surely consult. He said it earlier. He talked about experts who may be able to tell him how to proceed. But, as far as I am concerned, that is not the issue.

The web site is not accessible by all. There is no one who will go home this evening after having worked all day in a small business and will sit in front of a computer, key in the words "National Defence" and then write "I have something to say about National Defence". A much broader debate than that is needed.

The government should get the input of the taxpayer, of the person who is working for a small company and sees this evening that there is a broad consultation on National Defence. He will know that he can have a say. This is what we are interested in: broad consultations, not narrow ones on the Internet in the evening, or behind closed doors with military personnel or National Defence experts. Personally, I think that taxpayers should have a say in this.

• (1340)

[*English*]

**Mrs. Elsie Wayne (Saint John, PC):** Mr. Speaker, I want to compliment the Minister of National Defence for going public in Toronto saying that we need more money. I am surprised at the comments of my colleague from the Bloc. I am sure the people from Quebec, particularly those who are in the shipbuilding business at MIL Davie, and from our shipyard in Saint John and Halifax who build ships for our navy would like to work again. When one talks about being in poverty, the 4,000 men, who worked at my shipyard, are part and parcel of the poverty of today.

*Supply*

I am really shocked at what I am hearing today. When it comes the military, as I stated earlier today, those men and women in uniform cannot come here with placards like everyone else, no matter what the subject. They expect their elected members of Parliament to speak out for them.

When it comes to the replacement of the Sea Kings, does the hon. member think that people did not lose their lives? A pilot from outside my city lost his life in a Sea King. His father came to me and said, "Please get some new helicopters for our people. Give them the tools to do their job".

How could a member of our defence committee not be in favour of giving more money to our military? It is a number one urgent matter right now with what happened on September 11. If those attacks ever come to Canada, he will have a difficult time answering those questions.

[Translation]

**Mr. Claude Bachand:** Mr. Speaker, I am surprised to see that the hon. member is not aware of the recently tabled National Defence report.

My opinion, the Bloc Québécois dissenting opinion, is part of that report. What I have taken great pains to try to explain in the past 20 minutes is pretty well what is contained in the dissenting portion of that report.

The hon. member is illustrating how National Defence operates. The hon. member for Halifax wants naval shipyards, wants to see all Canadian vessels built at Saint John. Another member, who has aircraft operations in his riding, will be wanting to have all aircraft built and repaired in that riding. Then there is the gentleman from Shearwater, who will be asking for the landing strip there to be maintained.

That is why I am insisting this needs to be taken beyond the House of Commons. That is why the voters need to have a chance to say "Here is what we want". Then we will move on from there. It has nothing to do with the personal and political interests of individual members of this House.

[English]

**Mrs. Cheryl Gallant (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I thank our hon. colleague from the Bloc. He has been consistent in the Standing Committee on National Defence and Veterans Affairs and I thank him for working together on that.

My question for the hon. member has to do with supply chain. I would be interested in hearing how our budget deliberations and what the minister has said recently fit into his position on the supply chain issue.

[Translation]

**Mr. Claude Bachand:** Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for this question. Just before the House adjourned in June, there were rumours that the entire supply chain was going to be handed over to the private sector. My colleague and I waged a difficult battle to prevent that from happening. We believe that it is important that the supply chain remain within the army structures. I do not think that

the American army would give up its supply chain to private enterprise.

My colleague has given me another idea for an interesting debate that could be held with taxpayers. We could ask them, "Do you agree to privatization within the Canadian forces, within National Defence? How could this be done?" If it were to cost less, it could be interesting. However, if the results were less dependable, then it might not be so good.

In this type of debate on the supply chain, as for all of the types of debates that I raised earlier, I think that the final word rests with taxpayers. It is up to them to say what kind of army they want, what the role of privatization within National Defence should be. My colleague and I hope they will share our perspective.

● (1345)

[English]

**Ms. Alexa McDonough (Halifax, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I want to indicate at the outset that I will be sharing my time with the member Sackville—Musquodoboit Valley—Eastern Shore who is the NDP defence critic and a very capable one.

Before I move to the motion before us, it is appropriate to acknowledge that the member for Saint John, who introduced this motion, has been a tireless, inveterate champion of the needs of men and women of Canada's military service. I want to also say, because I do not get a chance to do this very often, that the same can also be said of my colleague, the defence critic for the NDP, the member for Sackville—Musquodoboit Valley—Eastern Shore.

On repeated occasions in the House, and again and again before his caucus colleagues, he has championed the need of veterans, the shabby treatment that veterans have received from the government. He has championed the needs of families of military personnel, who all too often have lived in shabby housing and have tried to make ends meet. Some of them have had to go to food banks because of inadequate pay. He has championed the cause of military personnel returning from overseas deployment, often stricken with diseases arising out of their overseas assignments or post-traumatic stress disorders. He has also and continues to champion the military women and men who are in active service on behalf of Canada today.

I listened with care to the Minister of National Defence in his earlier participation in this debate. I heard him say—and I am not sure this is an exact quote but I jotted down the sense of what he said—that when we send armed forces personnel into harm's way, we must be sure that they are properly equipped to fulfill the duties that are assigned to them on behalf of their country. I cannot imagine a single member of the House who would not agree with that statement. I cannot imagine a single Canadian who would think that we should be sending the men and women of our armed forces into harm's way without them being properly supported to fulfill their duties.

That was a rather general statement, a vague and meaningless statement. It really does not commit us to much of anything, not as a Parliament, not members opposite as a government and not the Canadian people.



I want to turn my attention to the motion that is before us. I actually endorse heartily the sentiment that stands behind the motion before us, which is much like the sentiment expressed by the Minister of Defence, that our armed forces personnel must be supported to do their jobs. However it is a bit ironic that the motion itself tends to be sufficiently vague as to be not very meaningful. It certainly is not very specific in terms of the steps or orderly procedure the government must take to act responsibly and fulfill its commitment to the armed forces personnel who serve their country proudly and all Canadian people.

I find the motion troublesome because it is very vague. It fails to mention the government's first priority in a very specific way. The government has failed to act on the recommendation of the parliamentary defence committee to conduct a full review to build public consensus on Canada's foreign policy and, within the context of that foreign policy, the support and commitment to our armed forces personnel who must be able to discharge their responsibilities in the context of that foreign policy.

If the motion were just vague I think we could all support it because it would not mean anything anyway. However, if the motion were to be supported by all members of the House, including government members, it might, in a very unfortunate way, let the government off the hook from getting on with what needs to be done, which is a thorough and comprehensive foreign policy review, how our armed forces fits within that policy and how it will be able support our commitments internationally.

• (1350)

I am not interested in letting the government off the hook. We need to unite and, I would think unanimously, to call upon the government to carry out that full discussion about our role in terms of international relations and our defence policy.

I have a third reason for finding the motion before us in its current form to be particularly troublesome this week. Last Wednesday the finance minister appeared in Halifax to talk about the state of the nation's finances and about the priorities for the future. Despite the fact that we are now in the fifth year of budget surplus, that we are way ahead in terms of debt reduction, of where the government's own plan would have had us if the performance of the economy and debt reduction had occurred based on its plan, the Minister of Finance declared we were projecting a budget surplus of \$1 billion.

I know it is not specifically cited by the motion, but the recommendation of the defence committee was that there should be an increase in defence spending in each of the next three successive years of \$1.3 billion. I think the government is low balling the projected surplus. I do not think there is any question about that. Even if it is remotely correct about a projected surplus of \$1 billion, what does it mean to have a motion today that is so vague as not to talk about any facts and figures that relate to a specific international affairs consensus in the country with the military budget that is needed to support our responsibilities? What does it mean when it does not relate to specific expenditures? That is a problem enough. However, what in the name of heavens would it mean if the motion were construed to mean that yes, an absolute minimum of \$1.3 billion in each of three successive years must be spent no matter what? It would have the effect of a unanimous resolution in the

### *Supply*

House, despite the fact that we have a very severe crisis in health care, because of billions and billions of dollars ripped out of our health care system and a royal commission about to make recommendations of how we remedy this; despite the fact that we have commitments internationally in conjunction with the Kyoto protocol that are critically important that we act on.

In the long run the investment will save money in becoming a more sustainable society. However, in the short run are we serious about saying that if there is a \$1 billion budget surplus that just in the next year \$1.3 billion needs to be spent on defence and not a cent toward our health deficit, our post-secondary education deficit, our severe housing deficit or our continuing disgraceful degree of child poverty?

I think the motion lacks specificity which, I say regretfully, makes it very difficult to support such an open-ended motion and one that is not lodged in the context of these two very important public policy matters. What will be Canada's commitment internationally and the defence requirements attached to it, and what will be the fiscal framework for addressing the deficiencies with respect to our support for the military?

Heaven knows, we are four square in our commitment to replace the Sea Kings right off the top, but we have no indication of what of the plan is within our responsible framework. We certainly are not in a position to make commitments without there being a fiscal framework within which we are making responsible choices among responsible priorities.

• (1355)

We support the sentiment that is behind the motion. However we would have a difficult time rationalizing support for it for the reasons I outlined.

**Mr. John O'Reilly (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the member for Halifax who has one of the largest naval presences in her riding. I am sorry to see her leave the position of leader of the NDP. When I see someone like Toronto's Jack Layton calling for \$47 billion for municipalities, I hope the members for Regina—Qu'Appelle and Winnipeg—Transcona are out selling a lot of memberships. The \$47 billion does not include a cent toward military. It is all toward other things.

Before she leaves, would the leader of the NDP take time to remove from the books of the NDP a motion that was made by its membership asking Canada to withdraw from NATO? Would she also tell us what her feeling is on that based on the fact that she does have a huge riding made up of military personnel?

**Ms. Alexa McDonough:** Mr. Speaker, the member is quite correct, I have a large population of military personnel in my riding. It has been a great privilege and pleasure to count them among my constituents. I am grateful for the incredible support that they have given me, not just in seven years in Parliament, but 15 years as leader of the New Democratic Party, and as provincial member for Halifax as well.

*S. O. 31*

Some people have always found it surprising that the military have been so supportive. The base within my riding, for example, has in almost every election overwhelmingly given me its majority support. I do not know whether the member will be unhappy to know that I am not going very far. I accept his good wishes, but it is my intention to seek the mandate of the people of Halifax, including the military men and women who serve so capably in our armed forces.

Let me address the question that the member has raised, because whether I am coming or going, it is an important question. It helps to underscore the point that I am making about how irresponsible it is for the government not to be getting on with urgent haste to conduct the overall review of our international obligation and of the foreign policy framework within which we can responsibly support our military to conduct the tasks that are assigned to it.

If the member who has raised the question is genuinely concerned about the role of NATO as it relates to Canada's foreign policy then will he not join us in pressing his government from the backbenches of the Liberal caucus to demand that we have that full review so that we are making responsible decisions about our international commitments including the military support that is necessary to carry them out?

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## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[*English*]

### PARLIAMENTARIANS FOR GLOBAL ACTION

**Mr. Irwin Cotler (Mount Royal, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Parliamentarians for Global Action, an association of democratically elected parliamentarians representing all regions of the world, whose Canadian branch I chair, is holding its 24th annual Parliamentary Assembly for the first time ever in Canada. More than 90 parliamentarians from over 50 countries are convening this week to address the International Criminal Court, the most dramatic development in international criminal law in years, and the Duty to Protect, an emerging and compelling international law doctrine. Both are crucial instruments in preventing mass atrocities, including war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide, and bringing those responsible to justice.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs and former minister Lloyd Axworthy opened the conference this morning. The international parliamentary delegations include major figures in human rights law. For the first time ever a Canadian, Ambassador Philippe Kirsch, is the recipient of the prestigious PGA Defender of Democracy Award, together with Lakhdar Brahimi, the United Nations special representative for Afghanistan.

I wish to express my appreciation to DFAIT, CIDA and you, Mr. Speaker, for the support we have received in the organization and financing of this conference.

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### QUEEN'S JUBILEE MEDAL

**Mr. Rick Casson (Lethbridge, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, on Wednesday, November 13, 2002, it will be my honour

to present the Queen's Jubilee Medal to 18 very worthy people from across southern Alberta. All these recipients have contributed to the communities and people around them in significant and unique ways.

The recipients are: Richard Papworth, Bernard Nieboer, Erna Goertzen, Robert Lee, Stella Lacey, Henry Lindstedt, Mary Schneider, Gary Bowie, David Carpenter, Keith Robin, Dick Dewert, June Hepple, Irma Dogterom, Flora Matteotti, Carol Steen, Carol Gemer, Colin Weir, and Ralph Thrall Jr.

So often we do not take the time to thank the unselfish people who have worked so hard in their own way to make this country great. On behalf of all Canadians, I wish to congratulate and thank them all.

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• (1400)

[*Translation*]

### FEDERAL ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES

**Mr. Guy St-Julien (Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Electoral Boundaries Commission for Quebec will not respond appropriately to several of my letters, that is the letters dated September 12, 13 and 19, and October 1, 2002, concerning a number of issues, including the regions of Nunavik and the Abitibi.

Moreover, it is referring me to several Internet sites, such as those of Elections Canada, Statistics Canada and Natural Resources Canada.

On October 9, 2002, in response to my letter dated October 1, 2002, Chief Electoral Officer Jean-Pierre Kingsley, wrote "I would like to make it clear that the federal electoral boundaries commissions established in the ten provinces operate at arm's length from Elections Canada. Their independence is a fundamental aspect of the federal readjustment process".

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### HIGHWAY INFRASTRUCTURE

**Mr. Gérard Binet (Frontenac—Mégantic, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this morning, the Minister of Transport entertained a petition brought to his attention by business people and stakeholders in the political community, who were accompanied by the hon. member for Beauce.

This petition is calling for highway 73 to be recognized as a national interest highway and for the safety conditions and traffic flow on route 173 to be significantly improved up to the Armstrong border crossing.

This petition was signed by more than 22,000 citizens, as well as more than 200 social and economic businesses and organizations, and municipal corporations.

Highway 73 and route 173 go through Beauce up to the Armstrong border crossing, and together, form the main artery to New England.

The people of Beauce are counting on the Government of Canada to help them put in place 21st century highway infrastructure.

### CANADA CAREER WEEK

**Ms. Raymonde Folco (Laval West, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Canada Career Week is taking place from November 3 to 9. This year's theme, "Focus on the Journey", reminds job seekers to keep their minds open and to seize opportunities as they make their way through life and career. Innovation and apprenticeship opportunities are essential to get a better job and a higher income.

This year, Canada Career Week is all the more important because it is supporting two priorities announced in the Speech from the Throne. These are the innovation strategy of the Government of Canada and the commitment to help Canadians gain the skills and knowledge required to find their place in the job market.

Such a week highlights what can and must be done to allow all Canadians to assume their rightful place in the labour market.

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[English]

### AGRICULTURE

**Mr. Gerry Ritz (Battlefords—Lloydminster, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, last spring, in an attempt to cloud a complete lack of vision for agriculture by his government the Minister for the Canadian Wheat Board said western farmers must plant more trees. He said two million acres of trees in Saskatchewan alone would alleviate the dependence of farmers on traditional crops.

One farmer in my riding took the minister's directive seriously. Joe Nicodemus developed a system to make cattle feed from white poplar trees. Expanding on an idea borne out of desperation during the 1930s, Mr. Nicodemus chips, then shreds these trees to make a silage that is high in vitamins and minerals.

Mr. Nicodemus, thinking his project timely, what with the directive from the minister and the feed shortage in western Canada, applied through the government's CARDS program for help in financing the expansion of his operation to a commercially viable size. Imagine his surprise to be denied, with no reasons given.

Mr. Nicodemus is now convinced, as are all other western farmers, that the Liberal government is all rhetoric and incapable of understanding the problems in agriculture, let alone having the solutions that are required.

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### SOCIAL PROGRAMS

**Ms. Beth Phinney (Hamilton Mountain, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as a Hamilton member of Parliament I would like to recognize Friends for Success Incorporated, an organization that provides low income citizens with appropriate clothing for work and, more importantly, encouragement to prepare them for job interviews and the workplace. The slogan on the front door reads "Helping people move toward independence".

Since opening its Hamilton location on October 1, Friends for Success has aided many citizens in their quest for dignity and independence. The response from the community has been huge in the few weeks since Friends for Success has opened its Hamilton centre.

*S. O. 31*

I would like to congratulate this volunteer organization and wish it all the best in its effort to help those seeking to enter or re-enter the workplace.

\* \* \*

• (1405)

[Translation]

### HYDROELECTRIC DEVELOPMENT

**Mr. Paul Crête (Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup—Témiscouata—Les Basques, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, as our energy consumption increases, so does the use of fossil fuels to produce electricity, while the use of renewable sources, such as hydroelectricity, is on the decrease.

The connection between climate change and the use of fossil fuels is clear. By contrast, hydroelectricity, which accounts for over 60% of the electricity produced in Canada, only generates minute volumes of greenhouse gases, in addition to being renewable.

The implementation of the Kyoto protocol by the Canadian government should include additional tax incentives to develop renewable energies, such as hydroelectricity, and non-polluting energies, such as wind energy, and to develop energy efficiency and conservation programs.

Hydroelectricity is the only clean, renewable and economical source of energy that can meet the demand for electricity, and it should be one of the main measures adopted in the fight against climate change.

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[English]

### THE ARCTIC

**Mr. Peter Adams (Peterborough, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Arctic parliamentarians from eight countries met in Norway this summer. The Canadian delegation reasserted Canada's policy objectives for the Arctic including: enhancing the security of Canadians, especially northerners and aboriginal peoples; asserting Canada's sovereignty in the north; establishing the circumpolar region as a vibrant geopolitical entity; and providing human security and sustainable development in the Arctic.

We support capacity building in the north, including the university of the Arctic. The Arctic Council is central to our approach to the north. We were proud of the recent contributions to an Arctic Council meeting made by our Minister of Foreign Affairs. There was also discussion of Canada's role in Antarctica.

Canada is a great polar nation. We should nurture the north domestically and internationally.

*S. O. 31*

### NATIONAL DEFENCE

**Mr. Roy Bailey (Souris—Moose Mountain, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister and the ancient Sea Kings have something in common. They both entered the service in 1963. After 40 years of public service the Prime Minister is ready to retire, but because he cancelled the Sea King's replacement, the Sea Kings will have to keep working until 2015, a full 11 years into the Prime Minister's retirement.

It is entirely conceivable that a grandchild of an original Sea King pilot could be flying it today. It is shameful that in nine years as Prime Minister he has been unable and, even worse, unwilling to replace the helicopters he cancelled. Neither have the three defence ministers he has had during that time.

The Sea Kings were once the pride of our nation but have now become a joke. This is a joke that no one is laughing at. The Prime Minister would leave a better legacy if the Sea Kings were to retire at the same time as the Prime Minister.

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### 2010 WINTER OLYMPICS

**Mr. Rodger Cuzner (Bras d'Or—Cape Breton, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the people of Bras d'Or—Cape Breton I would like to congratulate the Vancouver 2010 Winter Olympic and Paralympic Bid Corporation for making it onto the short list.

Vancouver and Whistler were selected by the international Olympic committee to take the bid to the next stage of competition at the end of August. Canada is now competing against Austria and South Korea to win the rights to host the world in 2010. We all know that in this Olympic competition there is only one medal.

The team, led by Canada's gold medallist, Mr. Jack Poole, includes volunteers and governments, first nations and athletes, the Canadian Olympic Committee, and leaders of business and finance from right across the country. The Vancouver 2010 Olympic and Paralympic bid is a true team Canada project.

Please join me in congratulating the Vancouver Bid Corporation for its success to date and wish it the very best in bringing the Olympics and Paralympics home in 2010.

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### VETERANS' WEEK

**Mr. Peter Stoffer (Sackville—Musquodoboit Valley—Eastern Shore, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, this week being the beginning of veterans week, it gives me great pleasure on behalf of the New Democratic Party to bring greetings to veterans and their families from coast to coast to coast and to remember those 116,000 souls who are unable to join Canada as a result of their various conflicts around the world.

I would also like to pay a very special homage to Ms. Doreen Coolen of the Hubbards area of Nova Scotia, who will be the Silver Cross Mother for 2002. It is most unfortunate that she lost a son in Afghanistan. We will remember his sacrifice and admire her courage in laying the wreath on behalf of all Silver Cross mothers across the country.

On behalf of my parents and my oldest brother who were liberated by the Canadian military in the liberation of Holland in 1945, I would like to say to all veterans and to all people who sacrificed so much so that people like myself could be free that in the going down of the sun and in the morning, we shall remember them. Lest we forget.

\* \* \*

• (1410)

[*Translation*]

### GENEVIÈVE VERRIER

**Ms. Pauline Picard (Drummond, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Réseau des femmes d'affaires du Québec recently gave out awards to nine women who have excelled in business. This second edition of the awards had some 22 finalists.

I am proud to announce that Geneviève Verrier, Director of Operations for Alpha, an insurance company headquartered in Drummondville, was awarded the top prize in the category "executive or professional, SME".

Since she joined Alpha in 1998, insurance premiums revenues rose from \$8 million to \$14 million.

This was not mere chance, but the result of a sustained effort by many people.

My congratulations to all those who contributed to the success of this SME in my area, and particular congratulations to Geneviève Verrier on her award.

\* \* \*

[*English*]

### ADOPTION AWARENESS MONTH

**Ms. Judy Sgro (York West, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to rise today to recognize November as Adoption Awareness Month. For over 20 years, Canadian families and support organizations have celebrated this important time.

This is an internationally proclaimed month to celebrate adoption and raise awareness of the thousands of children throughout North America and the world who are waiting to be adopted. Adoption Awareness Month is about celebration, gratitude and hope as well as informing people of the joy in providing a child with a permanent family.

Adoption provides a winning situation for everyone involved and helps us to build a stronger Canada.

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### COADY INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE

**Mr. Peter MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough, PC):** Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House to recognize and congratulate the world renowned Coady International Institute located at St. Francis Xavier University in my riding of Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough in Nova Scotia.

The Coady Institute was established at St. F.X. in 1959 and was named in honour of Dr. Moses Coady, a truly great Canadian and founder of the Antigonish Movement, a people's movement for economic and social justice.

Dr. Coady set up the institute to address poverty facing local fishers, farmers, forestry workers and coal miners with a program of adult education and group action directed toward the development of human capacities, economic cooperation and reform of social and economic institutions.

The Coady approach is more relevant than ever. The success of this movement attracted community leaders from across North America, and today men and women travel from over 120 different countries to take part in this campus based program.

On behalf of members of the Progressive Conservative Party and all members of Parliament, I commend the efforts of those who have continued in the tradition of Dr. Coady in creating innovative and effective strategies for building civil societies. On November 18, I invite all members—

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for Laval East.

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[Translation]

#### COMMUNITY SAFETY AND CRIME PREVENTION

**Ms. Carole-Marie Allard (Laval East, Lib.):** November is National Community Safety and Crime Prevention Month.

If we are all more aware of safety, our communities will be safer places to live. We can take action to fight crime as part of our daily activities. Just ask the people at la Maison des Jeunes de Marigot, in Laval East.

Many school children are bullied, while others are either bullies themselves, or witnesses.

I encourage schools, parents and students to take action and to learn more about the National Community Safety and Crime Prevention Strategy.

Together, we can reduce crime in our communities.

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[English]

#### UNITED STATES ELECTIONS

**Mr. James Moore (Port Moody—Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, tomorrow is election day in the United States. Americans will not only elect state and national representatives, they will decide issues themselves through citizen initiated referendums.

Voters in Oregon will vote on whether or not to require labelling of genetically modified foods. Florida voters will vote on offering free preschool for all four year old kids. North Dakota voters will vote on reimbursing students \$1,000 against their student loans to encourage them not to leave the state. Nevada voters will vote on legalizing marijuana. Arkansas voters will vote on whether or not to eliminate taxes on food and medicine.

#### Oral Questions

Voters will decide 203 different referendum questions in 40 of 50 states on a wide variety of issues, and it will be demonstrated that trusting the future to the judgment of citizens is a good idea.

In contrast, in Canada the Liberals have decided that Canadians cannot be trusted in the same way. The Canadian Alliance is the only party in Canada committed to giving Canadians the power to decide their future for themselves. Canadians deserve this democratic freedom, and we will continue to fight for their right to have it.

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### ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

● (1415)

[English]

#### PARLIAMENTARY REFORM

**Mr. Stephen Harper (Leader of the Opposition, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, electing committee chairs is a baby step toward returning democracy to the House. It is long overdue, even though it has been repeatedly rebuffed by this and previous governments.

The Prime Minister's support of the Canadian Alliance motion would be a step on the road to democratic reform. Could the Prime Minister not find it in his heart, in the smallest corner of his heart, to get behind this motion and allow the baby step of electing committee chairs in the House?

**Hon. Don Boudria (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. Leader of the Opposition perhaps is unaware that in the last Parliament we did not take baby steps. His House leader's contribution was much greater than that. We amended no less than 26 Standing Orders of the House. All political parties have worked constructively. The hon. member should try it.

**Mr. Stephen Harper (Leader of the Opposition, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, as a leading member of that party has said "It doesn't matter what you do, as long as you know someone in the PMO". That is what they say.

The government would deny MPs the rights given last week to murderers and rapists, the ability to vote by secret ballot. The government throws farmers in jail, yet refuses to give MPs, its backbenchers, these rights when it comes to committee chairs.

Is the government so fearful of democracy breaking out that it is unwilling to take the baby step of allowing committee chairs to be elected by secret ballot?

**Hon. Don Boudria (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would strongly recommend a reading of the Standing Orders by the hon. Leader of the Opposition. He will know that secret ballots are permitted now.

**Mr. Stephen Harper (Leader of the Opposition, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, they never happen. We will see whether the government supports this tomorrow.

*Oral Questions*

The government has been giving an excuse that the reason we cannot do this is only the Prime Minister could strike a regional and gender balance in choices for committee chairs. This is a Prime Minister who has picked 59 out of 69 male committee chairs and has had two-thirds of committee chairs coming from a single province and in some cases provinces have not had committee chairs in the past nine years.

Does the government really believe that members of the House could possibly do a worse job of striking regional and gender balance by voting for committee chairs by secret ballot?

**Hon. Don Boudria (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is once again wrong. He is not doing very well today. He said that no chair of committee was elected by secret ballot. The chair of the environment committee was.

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**NATIONAL DEFENCE**

**Mr. John Reynolds (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I will not comment on those last ones as they were incorrect.

For nine years the government has delayed much needed funding for military personnel and equipment. Ongoing neglect for Canada's military is making it increasingly difficult to meet our international obligations.

The Prime Minister has stated that fulfilling Kyoto's international obligation is essential. Why will he not apply the same sense of urgency to the needs of the Canadian Forces?

**Hon. John McCallum (Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, to say that we have not met our international obligations is absolutely false. We had 800 soldiers in Afghanistan who received huge praise from American colonels, generals and sergeants.

We had ships, nine at one point, operating seamlessly and leading the group in the Arabian Sea. Just last Thursday they captured a ship with five patrol vessels on the way to Iraq; not a bad day's work.

**Mr. John Reynolds (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, the arrogance is something else. It is a long way from the private dining rooms of the Royal Bank to the military mess halls.

Today marks the ninth anniversary of the cancellation of the Sea King replacement contract. For nine years the government has systematically neglected the needs of our military.

When will the government commit to providing our troops with the necessary revenues they need and stop all this poppycock?

**Hon. John McCallum (Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would acknowledge that it is a long way from Bay Street to Kandahar, but I am very glad I made that change.

As for the helicopters, 1,000 technical suggestions have been made by the companies. It takes a while to get everything moving. I am committed to moving this file as fast as possible and getting the best helicopter at the lowest price as soon as possible.

• (1420)

[*Translation*]

**GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS**

**Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, despite an e-mail message specifying that the firm the secretary of state wanted hired was Everest, the Minister of Public Works and Government Services insists that it was his department that awarded the contract. However, the minister forgot to mention that Everest had already been working for weeks before the contract was signed.

Will the minister not acknowledge that, according to the wishes of the former secretary of state, the dice were already loaded in favour of Everest well before the contract was officially awarded?

[*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 no idea what the preferences of any particular minister might have been at that time two or three years ago. The fact of the matter remains that the decision in this case was one that had to be made by those officials who were at the time in the Department of Public Works. They made the decision according to the procedures in place at that time.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I know that the minister does not want to answer my question because, in all likelihood, he knows the answer.

However, I will ask him this: since he has said that procedures were respected, is it customary for a firm to begin work before a contract has been awarded? Is this acceptable under his department's guidelines? I would like to hear what he has to say.

[*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 department works very hard to follow the guidelines and the policy principles established by Treasury Board for all matters of contracting, whether that is in the communications field or otherwise. I would note that because of the concerns that were expressed earlier this year, the Prime Minister instructed the President of the Treasury Board to review the governance framework for all contracting in the field of sponsorships and advertising. In due course the President of the Treasury Board will be making recommendations to strengthen the whole process.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Robert Lanctôt (Châteauguay, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, Everest was awarded the contract to organize consultations for the former Secretary of State for Amateur Sport on May 30, 2000.

However, the former secretary of state's tour began June 2 and 3 in Fredericton, only three days after Everest was awarded the contract.

Would the Minister of Public Works and Government Services still have us believe that Everest did not start work well before the contract was signed, as the former Secretary of State for Amateur Sport wished?

*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, the quality of the consultation, given the short timeframe, is a matter of particular importance. I am happy to have the remarks on May 22 by this hon. member, the member for Châteauguay, who indicated that this was an excellent initiative upon which he wished to congratulate the government.

*[Translation]*

**Mr. Robert Lanctôt (Châteauguay, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the minister is mixing apples and oranges. It is possible that things were done properly. However, awarding contracts prematurely is another matter altogether.

Prior to the May 30, 2000 contract, Everest submitted a budget estimate in which it forecast that it would cost \$60,000 to create an Internet site, a site that was launched on May 19, 2000 by the former secretary of state.

Can the Minister of Public Works affirm that Everest did no work prior to getting the contract, even though the site had been up and running for two weeks?

*[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 no personal knowledge at all of the matters that the hon. gentleman is alleging. He seems to have some concern with respect to dates and timing. I will inquire into those matters to see if there is anything that requires further clarification. However there is nothing before me at this time that would support the allegations he is making.

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*[Translation]***FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

**Ms. Alexa McDonough (Halifax, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, in spite of the Minister of Foreign Affairs' assurances to the contrary last week, Canadians born in the Middle East are still required to provide fingerprints at the border. They are still being photographed and flagged.

The U.S. is targeting Canadian citizens on the basis of their country of origin.

Why is this discriminatory practice still going on?

• (1425)

**Hon. Bill Graham (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we have had the assurance of the U.S. ambassador to Canada that it would end.

As I said the other day, naturally, it may take some time for the administration or officials in the administration to act on broad policies, but I am confident that this practice will end, as we were assured by the United States. We have established a good relationship with the U.S. on this issue.

*[English]*

**Ms. Alexa McDonough (Halifax, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I do not know how the minister can be satisfied. He must know that a veteran INS inspector yesterday stated that the discriminatory inspections of Canadians born in the Middle East remains in force. I quote his words further, "Canada took what they wanted out of a conversation with Mr. Powell and came away believing that we were not going to do the security entry/exit registration on their citizens".

We have a copy of the memo implementing the U.S. policy but nowhere can we find a memo cancelling that policy for Canadian citizens. Has the minister received such written information and if so, will he table it in the House?

**Hon. Bill Graham (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I had a personal conversation with the ambassador who assured me that he had spoken to Mr. Ashcroft and Mr. Powell and instructions would flow to end this practice. I believe that the ambassador had a similar conversation with the leader of the fifth party.

The ambassador of the United States has issued a press release stating that this practice is coming to an end. I have total confidence that the ambassador of the United States is stating to this country what is the official policy of the United States of America.

**Right Hon. Joe Clark (Calgary Centre, PC):** Mr. Speaker, last week the Prime Minister and the Minister of Finance gave contrary messages on bank mergers. Two weeks ago the Minister of National Defence announced his own unauthorized policy on defence spending.

Today the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration says it is wrong for the U.S. to apply what he calls racial profiling to Canadian landed immigrants from Commonwealth countries. The Minister of Foreign Affairs by contrast says the United States is perfectly entitled to make its own policies about Canadian landed immigrants.

Of these two warring ministers, who speaks for the government, or do neither of them speak for the government?

**Hon. Bill Graham (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration and I never enter into war. We are the best of collaborators on all these things.

The Minister of Citizenship and Immigration made a very good point saying that landed immigrants in this country are reliable because they are admitted to this country under very strict guidelines. We will continue to tell our American colleagues that fact.

It is also a fact however that the practice of visas is one that is followed. This is not a visa that is being applied to Canadian citizens. We must therefore respect what the United States is doing while at the same time drawing to its attention the nature of Canada, the nature of our immigration policies and the desire we have to have a free and open border between our two countries.

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**COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE**

**Right Hon. Joe Clark (Calgary Centre, PC):** You are better off with e-mails, Denis.

*Oral Questions*

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

**Right Hon. Joe Clark:** Mr. Speaker, rumours abound whether individual government members will be free to vote their conscience tomorrow afternoon regarding the election of committee chairs by secret ballot.

My question is for the Deputy Prime Minister. Will the Prime Minister allow a free vote for Liberal members of Parliament on this motion to make Parliament more effective? Perhaps while he is up, the Deputy Prime Minister could tell us whether that was the Prime Minister's idea or the idea of the hon. member for LaSalle—Émard.

**Hon. Don Boudria (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member seems to be asking a question about whether or not secret ballots are permitted for the election of committee chairs. Perhaps his House leader, or former House leader who is very well versed in these issues could explain to him that they are already.

If he is inquiring otherwise on the well-being of our caucus generally, I can tell him that it is just fine.

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**KYOTO PROTOCOL**

**Mr. James Moore (Port Moody—Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, the United States and Australia have chosen to develop their own emissions reduction targets rather than committing themselves to the unachievable goals of Kyoto. Other nations such as Argentina, Chile and Mexico have not committed to a firm Kyoto target. All of our major free trade partners, the U.S., Mexico and Chile, are working on their own solutions.

Why can we not have a made in Canada solution to Kyoto that balances our economic and environmental needs for the future?

•(1430)

**Hon. David Anderson (Minister of the Environment, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Canada did choose its own target just as other countries have done. Furthermore, Canada has developed a made in Canada plan with the cooperation of the provinces and territories. All 14 governments have been working on this for the last five years.

**Mr. James Moore (Port Moody—Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, if there is a made in Canada plan, it might be a surprise to the environment minister that Kyoto is not a Canadian city. He might think it is in British Columbia, given his lack of visiting B.C., but it is not in fact a Canadian city.

If Kyoto is what he considers a made in Canada plan, then why are provinces asking for a first ministers conference to talk about the issue so we can develop a real one with real numbers?

What is the government's principal opposition to having a first ministers conference to talk about Kyoto and work out real numbers in cooperation with the provinces?

**Hon. David Anderson (Minister of the Environment, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the principal issue that the hon. member has failed to grasp about climate change is that it is a global problem and it has to be dealt with on a global basis.

With respect to the meetings we have had with the provinces and territories, I believe we have had three this year with another to come. We had two or three last year. They are virtually continuous. In fact, we had one last year where less than half the provinces sent ministers because they complained we had had too many.

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[*Translation*]

**GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS**

**Mr. Richard Marceau (Charlesbourg—Jacques-Cartier, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Public Works keeps repeating that his department was the one that ultimately authorized the contract to Everest. That is not the problem; the problem is whether the former Secretary of State for Amateur Sport intervened on behalf of Everest in securing the contract.

Is the Minister of Public Works prepared to rise in his place and state that the former Secretary of State for Amateur Sport did not get involved at any time before Public Works Canada awarded the contract to Everest?

[*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, there is nothing in the material that I have reviewed that would indicate any contact or lobby between the secretary of state and the Department of Public Works and Government Services.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Richard Marceau (Charlesbourg—Jacques-Cartier, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, what we want to know from the minister is not whether the contract was awarded to Everest by Public Works Canada; that much we know.

The question is the following: Can the minister sincerely deny there was any intervention by the former Secretary of State for Amateur Sport to ensure that the contract was awarded to Everest, as stated in an e-mail from an official at Canadian Heritage, which he should have read by now?

[*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 seen news reports about the e-mail. I must say that I have never seen it myself. It is not something that is in the files of the Department of Public Works and Government Services. There is nothing in the material on the files for which I am responsible in public works that would support the allegations being made by the opposition.

**Mr. Jay Hill (Prince George—Peace River, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration continues to deny any involvement with awarding a one-half million dollar contract yet his former executive director is adamant that he was given orders to hire Groupe Everest.



We have been down this road before with the minister refusing to admit that he stayed at the firm's condo and then later admitting to it. The ethics counsellor said he is investigating whether he should investigate. Will the Deputy Prime Minister direct him to look into this matter and determine who is telling the truth, the minister or Mr. Farley?

**Hon. John Manley (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the ethics counsellor is free to look into any matters he wishes to look into. In the recent past he has shown that he is willing to do just that.

**Mr. Jay Hill (Prince George—Peace River, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, perhaps he is waiting for a directive. This is a very simple issue.

There is a direct contradiction between what the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration recalls and what his former assistant remembers. Only one of them can possibly be telling the truth.

The Prime Minister has launched his new so-called ethics package. What good is it if it does not compel the ethics counsellor to seek out the truth?

**Hon. John Manley (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the package we have tabled has certainly provided every member of Parliament with the ability to go directly to the ethics commissioner, as he would be known, in order to ask for the conduct of the minister to be looked into.

The current ethics counsellor has also shown his willingness to respond to issues that were raised either in the media or in Parliament. I invite the member, if he wishes, to write his own letter to the ethics counsellor.

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[Translation]

#### PUBLIC SAFETY

**Mr. Claude Bachand (Saint-Jean, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the new version of the Public Safety Act makes some minor changes to the provisions allowing the RCMP and CSIS to access information on air passengers and to use that information to draw up arrest warrants. The Privacy Commissioner has described these changes as “an insult to intelligence”.

How can the minister justify the potential use of information gathered under these extraordinary powers for purposes that have no connection with terrorism, transportation safety or national security?

• (1435)

[English]

**Hon. Wayne Easter (Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, certainly the privacy commissioner is entitled to his views.

There was a lot of discussion in the House and by colleagues in this party about previous Bill C-55. We believe that we have found the balance in this bill that protects the privacy of individuals while at the same time doing our job to ensure that national security issues are undertaken.

[Translation]

**Mr. Claude Bachand (Saint-Jean, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Privacy Commissioner has stated that “the right to anonymity with

regard to the state is a crucial privacy right”. According to him, “this would set the extraordinarily privacy-invasive precedent of effectively requiring compulsory self-identification to the police”.

How is it that the minister did not take any notice of the numerous warnings by the Privacy Commissioner, when such a fundamental right is at stake?

[English]

**Hon. Wayne Easter (Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we have taken the Privacy Commissioner's previous concerns into consideration and we do believe we have found the balance.

I would invite the hon. member opposite, rather than just reading the latest story in the press from the Privacy Commissioner, to actually sit down and read the bill. He will see that we have found the balance in terms of protecting privacy rights while at the same time ensuring that CSIS and the RCMP can do their jobs in terms of protecting the security of the nation.

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#### AGE OF CONSENT

**Mrs. Diane Ablonczy (Calgary—Nose Hill, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, a European Union report says that Canada is turning into a place where children are sexually exploited because of our age of consent laws. Increasingly, tourists visit Canada in search of sex with our children. Police and parents want the age of sexual consent raised from 14 to 16. Will the government commit to do this today and help guard Canadian children against sexual exploitation?

**Mr. Paul Harold Macklin (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, clearly the government has been looking at this. We set up a consultation process in 1999. It was brought forward in February of this year. The ministers directed their officials to bring forward recommendations. This week in Calgary they are bringing forward those recommendations and we will see what they result in.

**Mrs. Diane Ablonczy (Calgary—Nose Hill, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, here is a golden opportunity for the government to actually do something, because this issue is at the top of the agenda of the justice ministers meeting this week. They want to raise the age of sexual consent from 14 to 16. Canada's young age of consent brings in tourists seeking sex with girls as young as 14.

When will the Liberal government give police and parents the tool they need to protect Canadian children who fall prey to sexual predators, by raising the age of consent in Canada?

**Mr. Paul Harold Macklin (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, there is something clearly wrong with the member's question and it relates to the issue of prostitution. If she is referring to prostitution as bringing tourists to this country, the age of consent for prostitution is 18.

*Oral Questions***CHILD POVERTY**

**Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis (Winnipeg North Centre, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, once again another study documenting the national disgrace of child poverty has been released. It confirms that 300,000 children in Canada rely on food banks every month. That is 1,000 hungry children for every member in the House.

It was in 1989 that the House passed a motion unanimously calling for the eradication of child poverty by the year 2000. Thirteen years later, the situation is worse. Families in need are having more trouble escaping from poverty.

Will the finance minister commit the necessary resources to correct the government's pitiful record on child poverty?

**Ms. Raymonde Folco (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we welcome the publication by the Canadian Council on Social Development.

• (1440)

[*Translation*]

We are, however, encouraged to see that, contrary to what the hon. member over there tells us, the rate of child poverty is continuing to drop. The Canadian Council on Social Development report also reports there was a decrease in 1999 in the extent of poverty, and in how far poor families fall below the poverty line.

\* \* \*

[*English*]

**EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE**

**Mr. Yvon Godin (Acadie—Bathurst, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, 300,000 children have to go to the food bank every month and the government is proud because it has cut employment insurance when we have \$40 billion in surplus.

Are the government and the Deputy Prime Minister ready to make changes to employment insurance to make sure that children in our country do not go to the food bank, but go to the refrigerator to get some food every morning?

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Raymonde Folco (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would add, if I may, that a Statistics Canada report released last week indicates that the rate of child poverty continued to improve between 1999 and 2000, to reach—I repeat—one of the lowest levels recorded in the last 20 years.

These are encouraging findings. We are aware, however, that there is still much to be done to reduce the incidence of poverty, and we intend to do what needs doing.

\* \* \*

[*English*]

**NATIONAL DEFENCE**

**Mrs. Elsie Wayne (Saint John, PC):** Mr. Speaker, 10 days ago the Minister of National Defence went public with his concerns about his government's defence policy. He described the treatment of

our soldiers as “shabby” and he said that we needed more money just to sustain current operations.

Why is the minister facing resistance from his Minister of Finance and cabinet colleagues for more money for the military? Why does the government want to cut the military?

**Hon. John McCallum (Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the government, evidently, will make its position known at the time of the budget so the hon. member will simply have to wait, as will I, for the budget to come down.

I might say this as well on her leader. Who is the dictatorial leader? Is it our Prime Minister who gives a certain freedom of speech to his ministers, or is it the leader of the fifth party, who gets all frazzled because the Prime Minister did not go over my speech with a fine-tooth comb? He behaves as if he is a little Napoleon, albeit with a very small yard in which to play.

**Mrs. Elsie Wayne (Saint John, PC):** Mr. Speaker, last October when speaking about defence spending the Deputy Prime Minister said “You can't just sit at the G-8 table and then, when the bill comes, go to the washroom”. He has now been finance minister for almost five months but has yet to reinvest or even commit to reinvesting in our military.

Why has the Minister of Finance not given badly needed resources to our armed forces? What is he waiting for? Is he still in the washroom? Has he not come out of the washroom yet?

**Hon. John McCallum (Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member from Elba for her question and I assure her once more that the decision on this matter will be made in the budget.

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**EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE**

**Mr. Monte Solberg (Medicine Hat, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, finance ministers come and go but the annual employment insurance rip-off goes on and on. Every year the Liberals force workers and business to pay far more into the EI fund than they will ever get out. The Auditor General is now not so subtly criticizing the government for its creative accounting.

My question is for the finance minister. Why are accounting scams so bad in the corporate world when shareholders are at risk but perfectly acceptable to the government when it involves tens of billions of taxpayers' dollars?

*Oral Questions*

**Hon. John Manley (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it seems like critics on that side come and go too, but it is nice to have the member for Medicine Hat asking a question about finance again. If he is having difficulty reading the public accounts we will try to help him with it. I think that the numbers with respect to employment insurance are very clear.

I have also, in response to questions last week at the time of the update, indicated that we will be setting the rate for 2003 in the normal time, by the end of November, and that we will undertake as promised to consult with Canadians on how the rate-setting mechanism should apply in future years.

**Mr. Monte Solberg (Medicine Hat, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, the finance minister only has to listen to the chief actuary. It is very simple.

I cannot get anything out of the finance minister so maybe I will direct my question to Martha Stewart. Did I say that? I thought I was only thinking it.

If the human resources minister is at all concerned about protecting workers and expanding employment, expanding jobs in Canada, my question for the human resources minister is this: Will she stand up today and speak out on behalf of workers and employers and demand that the finance minister bring premiums into line with the rates that are demanded by the chief actuary?

• (1445)

**Hon. John Manley (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I cannot say what he is thinking. He might want to make a mental note of it if he has something to write on.

A hundred billion dollars in reductions in taxes is the most in Canadian history. Who does he think pays those taxes? Does he think that contributors to the EI program do not pay taxes somehow and therefore they are getting ripped off? The reduction in taxes includes all the charges that people were paying. Canadians pay taxes. They wanted to pay less and they are paying less.

\* \* \*

[*Translation*]

**FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

**Ms. Francine Lalonde (Mercier, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, after the Michel Jalbert case, newspapers are now reporting that a Quebec trucker was mistreated by U.S. customs officers when he crossed the border for his delivery. According to the citizen in question, he was treated like a circus animal, for no reason.

Given the growing number of such incidents at the border, is the Minister of Foreign Affairs planning on sending an official letter of protest to U.S. authorities to condemn the lack of discretion demonstrated by U.S. customs officials?

**Hon. Bill Graham (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we are in regular contact with our American counterparts. I assure the House that I will contact the U.S. embassy to share with them Canadians' concerns regarding all of these types of incident.

However, a handful of such incidents should not hinder the close relationship between two countries that have the best relations in the world.

**Ms. Francine Lalonde (Mercier, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, indeed, this type of incident is unfortunate when it occurs between countries that are friends. For this reason, I ask the Minister of Foreign Affairs to inform his American counterpart of the extremely serious consequences that any incident of this type at the border will have for Canadians, including for those travelling with Canadian passports who were born in other countries, particularly in the Middle East.

**Hon. Bill Graham (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I promise the member that I will send the American ambassador a copy of today's *Hansard* so that he can read about these problems for himself.

\* \* \*

[*English*]

**HEALTH**

**Mr. Rob Merrifield (Yellowhead, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, the finance minister is still quite confused. He says that he does not favour a tax increase for health care, but he also says that if we are driven to that conclusion we will have to consider it.

Let us just clear this up. Will there be higher taxes for health care?

**Hon. John Manley (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we do not even have the Romanow report yet. I think the member is putting the cart before the horse. Let us get the report. Let us consult with the provinces. Then we will decide what is required and what actions need to be taken to deal with it.

As I have said repeatedly, I do not favour tax increases. I favour tax decreases. That is why we continue to implement the \$100 billion tax reduction that was announced in October 2000.

**Mr. Rob Merrifield (Yellowhead, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, the money for health care has to come from one of two places: new taxes or new priorities. The government has to come clean on this one. Which is it going to be?

**Hon. John Manley (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, there are plenty of assumptions that we have to make when we go into the budget process and one of those includes future economic growth.

I want the hon. member to understand very clearly. We have committed ourselves to maintaining a positive budget surplus. We have committed ourselves to implementing the tax cuts. Unlike his cousins in Ontario who deferred their tax cuts after promising them going into an election, we intend to implement ours and we will meet the needs. We will do our part in terms of health care as we have committed to do repeatedly.

*Oral Questions***CORRECTIONAL SERVICE CANADA**

**Mr. Randy White (Langley—Abbotsford, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, the Canada Elections Act allows persons the right to run for public office if they have the right to vote. During this government's watch we see that prisoners just got the right to vote. I would like to ask the solicitor general if he thinks it is appropriate and right for prisoners to run for public office since they just got the right to vote.

• (1450)

**Hon. Wayne Easter (Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this is not the first time this member has his facts absolutely wrong. There certainly was a court decision in one province relative to the matter. The matter is before the courts and it would be inappropriate for me to speak on it beyond that.

**Mr. Randy White (Langley—Abbotsford, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I am just seeing one absurdity after another in Wayne's world. Talk about another absurdity, we now see—

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for Langley—Abbotsford is an experienced member, especially in matters of procedure. I am not sure who he was referring to as Wayne, but I can guess, and I do not think it would be appropriate to use that kind of expression when he is addressing the Speaker. He would want to be careful and maybe save those comments for outside the House.

**Mr. Randy White:** Yes, you bet, Mr. Speaker.

Let us go to another absurdity. We now see a provincial court decision that will affect federal courts and federal prisons. Yes, prisoners will now be able to earn themselves protection from prison life. The ability to make shanks in prison to protect themselves is completely absurd. Since the Solicitor General removed the right of guards to arm themselves, I wonder just what he thinks about prisoners arming themselves.

**Hon. Wayne Easter (Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the member is certainly reading more into this question than the facts. I expect the hon. member is aware that this is indeed a provincial matter. It is a matter that is before the courts. Again, I cannot speak specifically on the issue but I will tell the hon. member, and he knows full well, that we take the issue of public safety and security very, very seriously and will continue to do so.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**SOCIAL HOUSING**

**Ms. Diane Bourgeois (Terrebonne—Blainville, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, in order to deal with the current housing crisis, including in Montreal, the federal government told us loud and clear that it had joined efforts with a coalition of community groups from the City of Montreal and the Quebec government, under operation Solidarité 5 000 logements. However, this initiative is experiencing major delays because, among other reasons, of the lack of available land.

Could the federal government establish standards for Crown corporations that come under its jurisdiction, such as the CBC, so that these corporations take into account government policies, including in the area of housing—

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

[English]

**Hon. David Collenette (Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to point out to the hon. member that the government has done an outstanding job in providing affordable housing for Canadians. In fact, we have annual subsidies of \$1.9 billion for housing, we announced \$680 million in the throne speech and we now have 10 out of 12 agreements signed by the provinces and territories across the country.

The hon. member can get as upset as she wants, but the people of Montreal, the people of Quebec, as with others across the country, will benefit from this very enlightened housing policy.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**HIGHWAY INFRASTRUCTURE**

**Mr. Mario Laframboise (Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Quebec government announced that it is ready to complete highway 50 and that, if the federal government procrastinates, it will build a two lane highway, as opposed to a four lane highway. We have been asking questions to the federal Minister of Transport for months and we have yet to obtain a firm commitment on his part regarding the federal government's participation in this project.

Does the federal government intend to announce its participation very soon, so that the original plans to make highway 50 a four lane highway can become reality?

**Hon. David Collenette (Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is well aware that highway 50 is not part of the national highway network and, for that reason, there are no funds in the infrastructure program for the improvement of that highway. Such improvements are the responsibility of the Quebec government, and I hope that the province will fulfill its responsibility.

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[English]

**AIRPORT SECURITY**

**Mrs. Bev Desjarlais (Churchill, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the government continues to promote the illusion of security at airports. Yet the reality is that in spite of making Canadians pay billions for security at airports the number of customs officers and border guards has been cut and there are still airports where passengers pay the tax but do not go through any security checks.

Why can the government not admit that the airport security tax is not ensuring or improving security?

• (1455)

**Hon. David Collenette (Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I do not know where the hon. member has been while she has been travelling across the country.

Every Canadian will know that airport security has increased immeasurably since September 11, 2001. We have led the way. In fact, the Americans have followed our lead in many cases.

*Oral Questions*

I know that there has been some degree of controversy about the airline charge. My colleague, the Minister of Finance, is reviewing it. I can assure the hon. member that the improvements are now on budget and on time, and if the hon. member pays more attention to security as she goes through she will see that the equipment is being deployed and there are much more rigorous standards than there were before.

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**EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE**

**Mr. Norman Doyle (St. John's East, PC):** Mr. Speaker, the Auditor General has said that the Employment Insurance Act governing the EI program does not allow for a surplus beyond what is needed to cover an economic downturn.

The surplus reached \$40 billion at the end of the fiscal year and the Auditor General is saying that HRDC is breaking its own rules.

When will the government lower EI rates so that they actually meet the needs of the program?

**Hon. John Manley (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as I said earlier, we will establish the rate for 2003 in the normal timeframe before the end of November. We will fulfill the undertaking to consult with Canadians on the appropriate mechanism for establishing the rate going forward, with the intention that mechanism should be in effect in time for establishing the rate for 2004.

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**GRAIN TRANSPORTATION**

**Mr. Jim Gouk (Kootenay—Boundary—Okanagan, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, striking longshoremen at Vancouver were legislated back to work after 11 days, CN and CP Rail unions after 18 days, and postal workers after 14 days. Air traffic controllers were legislated before they went out.

Grain workers at the port of Vancouver have been without a contract since December 2000 and have been locked out by the employer for over two months. Talks have broken down and there is no end in sight.

Why does the government move so quickly when unions go on strike and yet takes no action when employers lock workers out? Why the double standard?

**Hon. Claudette Bradshaw (Minister of Labour, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the employee and the employers talk on a regular basis with our mediators and conciliators. I urge both parties to go to the table and negotiate a good collective agreement.

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[Translation]

**GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS**

**Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, during question period, the Minister of Public Works said he had never seen the e-mail in which two officials at Canadian Heritage stated that the Secretary of State for Amateur Sport intervened in the selection of Everest.

That is rather surprising. It has been in all the newspapers for weeks. Following his response, I sent the e-mail in question to the minister during question period.

In light of the rather significant statements made in this e-mail, does the minister not believe he should refer the matter to the RCMP so that the secretary of state's intervention can be investigated?

Now that he has the e-mail in hand, will he answer?

[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 gentlemen has sent me the piece of paper referred to. I intend to ask some questions about it but, quite frankly, there is nothing on the face of that document that would warrant an investigation by the police.

\* \* \*

**NATIONAL DEFENCE**

**Mr. Peter Stoffer (Sackville—Musquodoboit Valley—Eastern Shore, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, as time goes on many people within the PSAC union and the business community across the country are very nervous about the future of the supply chain when it is attached to the military.

Could the Minister of National Defence tell us exactly what the current status is of the talks with Tibbett & Britten of England? Will he now cancel that nefarious contract that will privatize an \$800 million public service to the private sector, which will doom many people and their jobs?

**Hon. John McCallum (Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as I have said several times, we will go ahead with the supply chain project if, and only if, there are substantial savings.

I will acknowledge that my department has been moving at something less than the speed of light on this issue. Partly for that reason, I will tell the hon. member today that I will announce a decision on this matter before the end of the month.

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**PUBLIC WORKS**

**Right Hon. Joe Clark (Calgary Centre, PC):** Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is for the Minister of Public Works.

He has just said that the e-mail, which he has just seen for the first time, does not warrant examination by the RCMP.

On what basis did he come to that conclusion? Did he receive legal advice from law officers of the Crown? Did he consult the RCMP? Why is he taking it on his own to reject absolutely the possibility of criminal wrongdoing without any expert advice?

*Routine Proceedings*

•(1500)

**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 would advise the right hon. gentleman to read very carefully the answer I gave a few moments ago.

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**CRIMINAL CODE**

**Mr. Art Hanger (Calgary Northeast, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, there has been quite a cry throughout the country, not only from parents but from those who have been victimized by predators, to have the age of sexual consent raised from 14 to 16.

Is it really the government's intent to protect children under the age of 16 from sexual predators?

**Mr. Paul Harold Macklin (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, clearly, children are a priority of the government. I do not think there is any doubt on this side of the House that we have attempted through Bill C-15A, which is now in legislation dealing with Internet luring, that we are not taking action. We are taking action.

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**ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS**

[English]

**ORDER IN COUNCIL APPOINTMENTS**

**Mr. Geoff Regan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to table, in both official languages, a number of order in council appointments made recently by the government.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**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.

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[English]

**COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE**

## PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

**Mr. Peter Adams (Peterborough, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present the seventh report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs regarding private members' business.

The report recommends that one of the bills from the first session of this Parliament, reinstated in this session, be made votable since it was never considered by the subcommittee on private members' business prior to prorogation. If the House gives its consent, I intend to move concurrence in the seventh report later this day.

I might say to those who have copies of the report that at the beginning of the second paragraph on the second page there is a typographical error which I have in fact changed.

\* \* \*

**AERONAUTICS ACT**

**Ms. Beth Phinney (Hamilton Mountain, Lib.)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-287, an act to amend the Aeronautics Act (automatic defibrillators).

She said: Mr. Speaker, I would like to reintroduce, seconded by my hon. colleague from Thunder Bay—Superior North, my bill to amend the Aeronautics Act, which would require all commercial passenger services in Canada with flights over one hour to carry automated external defibrillators providing passengers and crew with lifesaving technology.

Many airlines, such as American, Qantas and British Airways, already carry automated defibrillators on board. This enables trained staff to immediately treat passengers suffering from cardiac arrest rather than delaying treatment until the plane reaches its destination or is forced to land.

I hope all members will support the bill when it comes before the House.

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

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•(1505)

**CANADA LABOUR CODE**

**Ms. Beth Phinney (Hamilton Mountain, Lib.)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-288, an act to amend the Canada Labour Code (defibrillators in the workplace).

She said: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to reintroduce a private member's bill, an act to amend the Canada Labour Code, seconded by hon. colleague from Thunder Bay—Superior North.

As everyone knows, when a person suffers cardiac arrest, time is of the essence. A person suffering from sudden cardiac arrest has a 70% chance of survival if he or she can be treated within four minutes.

My bill to amend the Canada Labour Code would ensure that all major public buildings would have defibrillators installed and have staff trained in using them in the unfortunate case that someone suffers a heart attack. This requirement has the potential to save lives. If even one life is saved due to the nearby presence of automatic defibrillator units, the bill should be passed.

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

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**CRIMINAL CODE**

**Mr. Peter MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough, PC)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-289, an act to amend the Criminal Code (impaired driving causing death or injury).

He said: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to bring the motion forward again which would amend the Criminal Code to add additional powers to police officers to demand a breath or a blood sample when an accident occurs causing death or serious bodily harm. What it would do, in essence, is give the police reasonable and probable grounds to make that demand based on the accident alone where death or serious bodily harm has occurred. I believe this would be a substantial improvement in the ability of the police to fight this serious carnage that occurs on our highways every day.

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

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#### CRIMINAL CODE

**Mr. Peter MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough, PC)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-290, an act to amend the Criminal Code (order of prohibition).

He said: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from St. John's East for his support on this.

The purpose of the bill would be to amend section 161 of the Criminal Code where an offender is convicted of a sexual offence. The enactment currently permits the court to make an order prohibiting the offender from being in a number of enunciated places in the Criminal Code, including a schoolyard or playground. This would add to that list the term dwelling house, where the offender knows or ought to know that a person under the age of 14 is present and a person who has custody or control of the person under the age of 14 is not present. It would require that an adult be present when there is a sexual offender in the dwelling house. Again, this is for the protection of children.

The impetus for the bill was Ms. Goler, who was a victim in the province of Nova Scotia many years ago in a dwelling house.

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

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#### CRIMINAL CODE

**Mr. Peter MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough, PC)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-291, an act to amend the Criminal Code (keeping child pornography in a manner that is not reasonably secure from access by others).

He said: Mr. Speaker, the bill is aimed specifically at amending the Criminal Code to make it an offence for those who possess child pornography, whether created by that person or obtained from another source, to allow it to be accessed, and to take reasonable steps to prevent access by any other individual. Obviously this would become redundant if and when the government acts on the fallout from the Sharpe case out of the Supreme Court. However this is aimed specifically at protecting anyone from having access to this type of material.

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

#### Routine Proceedings

● (1510)

#### CRIMINAL CODE

**Mr. Peter MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough, PC)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-292, an act to amend the Criminal Code (breach of a conditional sentence order).

He said: Mr. Speaker, the bill is aimed specifically at amending section 742.6(9) of the Criminal Code which deals with an offender who has breached a conditional sentence without reasonable excuse. The enactment would enable the court's option of taking no action to be removed and would require the court, in certain circumstances, to terminate the conditional sentence order that the sentence may be served in custody. As a result, section 742.7(2) of the act would also be amended to make it necessary for the consequential change within that reference.

It is once more an attempt to pre-empt the government's inaction on this issue of conditional sentences.

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

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#### CORRECTIONS AND CONDITIONAL RELEASE ACT

**Mr. Peter MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough, PC)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-293, an act to amend the Corrections and Conditional Release Act and the Criminal Code (sentencing judge to determine level of security of incarceration of inmate for first third of sentence).

He said: Mr. Speaker, perhaps I do need an omnibus bill. Sentencing judges currently have the ability to determine the level of security of incarceration of inmates for the first third of the sentence. This would amend the Criminal Code and the Corrections and Conditional Release Act to require the court, in passing a sentence of two years or more of imprisonment, to make an order specifying the minimum security level of incarceration for the first third of the sentence. As a result, several provisions of the CCRA would also have to be amended in consequence.

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

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#### DIVORCE ACT

**Mr. Peter MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough, PC)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-294, an act to amend the Divorce Act (custody of grandchildren).

He said: Mr. Speaker, this amendment to the Divorce Act would allow grandparents to apply for custody of their grandchildren without leave of the court. Clearly, it would still have to be granted by the court in the final analysis, but would do away with any blocks to do it. It would give automatic standing should the grandparents choose to seek it.

*Routine Proceedings*

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

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**CRIMINAL CODE**

**Mr. Peter MacKay (Picton—Antigonish—Guysborough, PC)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-295, an act to amend the Criminal Code (recruitment of children and swarming).

He said: Mr. Speaker, the bill is an amendment to the Criminal Code aimed specifically at the more recent phenomenon of swarming, wherein individuals like Jonathan Wamback have suffered grave injuries as a result of this type of offence. It would amend the Criminal Code to make it illegal to recruit individuals, most often teenagers, to commit offences that result in this type of activity of mass beatings, where an individual's life and limb are put at jeopardy.

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

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**INCOME TAX ACT**

**Mr. Peter Stoffer (Sackville—Musquodoboit Valley—Eastern Shore, NDP)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-296, an act to amend the Income Tax Act.

He said: Mr. Speaker, the bill in essence allows those who volunteer for regular church service or charity organizations to deduct \$1,000 from their income tax if indeed they donate 250 hours a year or more to that particular institution.

We are talking about people who volunteer for the Lions Club, for the Legion, for hospices and hospitals. We are talking about the Rotarians, Kiwanis Club members, and all those people who volunteer countless numbers of hours in order for them to assist us in building a better country.

I think the bill, after careful consideration by all the members of Parliament, will sweep through the House like wildfire and become votable very soon.

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

\* \* \*

● (1515)

**COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE**

## PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

**Mr. Peter Adams (Peterborough, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, if the House gives its consent, I move that the seventh report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs presented to the House earlier this day be concurred in.

**The Speaker:** Does the hon. member for Peterborough have the unanimous consent of the House to propose the motion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

(Motion agreed to)

**PETITIONS**

## IRAQ

**Mr. Peter Adams (Peterborough, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise to present a petition from Canadians who are concerned about a possible pre-emptive strike against Iraq. These citizens are not only from Peterborough, but from as far away as Minden, Harrowsmith, Millbrook, Picton and various places in eastern Ontario.

They point out that a pre-emptive strike to overthrow the Government of Iraq would be a flagrant abuse of the United Nations charter. They also point out that we all mourn the deaths of up to 3,000 people as a result of the insidious attacks on New York last year. They point out that by rejecting violence and lifting the sanctions against the Iraqi people we would win the goodwill of Iraqi citizens and open the door for them to make political changes leading to peace.

They call upon Parliament 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, 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.

## CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

**Mr. Philip Mayfield (Cariboo—Chilcotin, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I have four petitions from citizens of Cariboo—Chilcotin who condemn the use and creation of child pornography. The petitioners call upon Parliament to protect our children by taking all necessary steps to ensure that all materials which promote or glorify pedophilia or sado-masochistic activities involving children are outlawed.

## STEM CELL RESEARCH

**Mr. Philip Mayfield (Cariboo—Chilcotin, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I have another petition from citizens of Cariboo—Chilcotin who are concerned for Canadians suffering from debilitating illnesses and diseases such as Parkinson's, Alzheimer's, diabetes, cancer, muscular dystrophy and spinal cord injury. The petitioners call upon Parliament to focus its legislative support on adult stem cell research to find the cures and therapies necessary to treat the illness and disease of suffering Canadians.

## CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

**Mrs. Elsie Wayne (Saint John, PC):** Mr. Speaker, I wish to present a petition with regard to child pornography. It contains over 800 names. The petitioners call upon Parliament to protect our children by taking all necessary steps to ensure that all materials which promote or glorify pedophilia or sado-masochistic activities involving children are outlawed.



## STEM CELL RESEARCH

**Mr. Norman Doyle (St. John's East, PC):** Mr. Speaker, I have a petition signed by about 100 people in St. John's in my constituency of St. John's East. They are making the point that non-embryonic stem cells which are known as adult stem cells have shown significant research progress without the immune rejection or ethical problems associated with embryonic stem cells. The petitioners call upon Parliament to focus its support on adult stem cell research to find cures and therapies necessary to treat the illness and disease of suffering Canadians.

## COAST GUARD

**Mr. John Cummins (Delta—South Richmond, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure today to present a petition signed by citizens primarily from the city of Maple Ridge, British Columbia.

The petitioners are expressing their concern about the Coast Guard, diving regulations and so on. They are concerned that the government is no longer providing adequate funding for the Coast Guard. They note that a new hovercraft is essential and that the old one needs to be replaced.

The petitioners call upon the government to separate the Coast Guard from the Department of Fisheries and Oceans so it can be a stand-alone body dedicated to marine safety and its other functions.

\* \* \*

• (1520)

## STARRED QUESTIONS

**Mr. Geoff Regan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, would you be so kind as to call Starred Question No. 20.

[Text]

\*Question No. 20—**Mr. Bill Casey:**

With respect to reports that 32,736 cases of people who applied to come here from Thailand, but whose files were reported missing in May 2002: (a) has the RCMP initiated an investigation; (b) if an investigation has been initiated at what stage is the probe; (c) if no investigation has been initiated, why; (d) has it been confirmed that the missing files did not belong to anyone who had entered the country from Bangkok; and (e) what action has been taken to ensure that the National Archives of Canada is indeed the only department destroying files when required?

**Mr. Geoff Regan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Insofar as Citizenship and Immigration Canada, CIC, is concerned, the reply is as follows: a) CIC has had no contact with the RCMP on this matter. The hon. member should be advised that no data files were destroyed. Files were simply moved from an active database. b) See the answer to a). No investigation has been initiated. c) Files were not destroyed. Data that have no operational value are retired from the active database but the information is still maintained on the system. The information contained in these files was and is still available. d) There are no missing files. The data has simply been moved from the active database. It is permanently on site and at CIC national headquarters. e) Treasury Board policy regarding the management of government information holdings adheres to the requirements of the National Archives Act with respect to records disposition. CIC's management of the database is in full compliance

## Supply

with both the law and government policy on the retention of information.

[English]

**The Speaker:** Is that agreed?**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

## SUPPLY

## ALLOTTED DAY—CANADIAN FORCES

The House resumed consideration of the motion.

**Mr. Peter Stoffer (Sackville—Musquodoboit Valley—Eastern Shore, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, first let me congratulate the hon. member for Saint John for her tireless efforts in support of our men and women who are currently in the military, as well as our veterans corps and the reservists. For as long as I have known the hon. member, previously when she was the mayor of her town and now as the member of Parliament representing her area, she has stood up valiantly and courageously for the men and women of the military. For that she deserves our deepest applause.

I have a concern with the motion put forward today. I absolutely agree that more resources must go to the military, even after a full review, but the reality is that the motion before us is so vague that if the Liberal government puts in just one extra dollar, it will have met the conditions of the motion. That is not what I believe the member would like to have in the motion. I think she would like a constructive effort by the government. For that matter, all members of the House would like to have a constructive debate and dialogue about the future of our military, its resources and its capability domestically as well as its capability and alliances not only with our greatest trading partner, the United States, but with our other allies around the world as well.

The hon. member for Nepean—Carleton, the chair of the Standing Committee on National Defence and Veterans Affairs, has done yeoman's work in being very pragmatic in his approach to bringing the five parliamentary parties together to try to reach a consensus on what is the best approach for the future of our military. For that he deserves our applause. I find him to be a very credible and fine chair of our committee. I hope he will regain that position when the committees resume sitting.

Many groups, the Conference of Defence Associations, the Standing Committee on National Defence and Veterans Affairs, the Senate committee and many individual Canadians across the country have encouraged the government to allocate more resources for our military. Recently, a woman from Calgary, Ms. Corrie Adolph, put forward a petition on this issue. They all should be complimented.

### *Supply*

At the same time, these same voices are also saying we cannot just allocate  $x$  number of dollars to a particular department under the authority of the Liberal government, because we know most of it will get wasted without a clear direction and, I would suggest, a new white paper. It does not have to drag out for years. We have the expertise internally and externally and from all political parties. We need to get together for that desperately needed forum to ensure that the additional resources that go to the military are spent with the future in mind while considering the current conditions of our military personnel and the reservists.

I also want to pay special homage to a wonderful woman from Nova Scotia who will be the Silver Cross Mother. Doreen Coolen from the Hubbards, Nova Scotia area will lay the wreath as the Silver Cross Mother. I want to pay her special thanks and homage for the great service she will provide on Remembrance Day. Her family went through a terrible tragedy when her son passed away in Afghanistan. She will have the honour of coming to Ottawa and, on behalf of all Silver Cross Mothers in the history of our country, laying a wreath at the wonderful Cenotaph here in Ottawa. What a special tribute she will be paying to all the current military personnel as well.

I and others in the New Democratic Party are asking what is our position on the military. Some people say that the NDP and the military is an oxymoron, but that simply is not true. Many people in our party have fought long and hard to address the serious concerns of our military with the present government and previous governments as well.

Yesterday was the ninth anniversary of the cancellation of the EH-101 contract, the Sea King replacement. Nine years ago that was cancelled. As we speak, there is not a word on when those Sea Kings will be replaced. Just as important, our vessels desperately need to be replaced. They need to be replaced as soon as possible. Not only would this be an investment in our military and our country, it would be an investment in jobs in all the shipbuilding cities not just in Atlantic Canada, but across the country in Lévis, Quebec, in Welland, Ontario and in British Columbia.

• (1525)

I have always said that an investment in the military is an investment in one's country. We cannot talk about sovereignty unless we have a defence that is proactive and reactive. We have the longest coastline in the entire world. Our maintenance on our coastline is dwindling not only in terms of the Coast Guard but in terms of our military patrols. Our Aurora fleet has been cut back and our frigate patrols on our coastlines have been cut back. It is no surprise that we have environmental spills, illegal fishing, illegal immigration and illegal drugs coming into the country. We are simply not patrolling our waters.

Anyone who says that the military should not have additional adequate resources is simply fooling themselves. The reality is that the motion before us is very vague in its context and unfortunately is unsupportable at this time, but the premise of the motion brought forward by the member for Saint John, New Brunswick is definitely supportable. The fact is that the government has been derelict in its responsibility toward the military. It is time that we started looking at the military in a much more positive and proactive light.

The men and women of our military are some of the bravest people in the country. They are willing to lay their lives on the line in defence of democracy and freedom. It is no surprise that we are debating this during Veterans' Week. The fact is that we have 116,000 men and women much younger than I am who have laid their lives on the line in over 70 countries around the world so that I can live in peace and freedom.

If it were not for the decision of this House during World War II that sent the troops overseas to save my mom, my dad, my oldest brother, thousands of other Dutch people and their families and millions of others from the tyranny of Naziism, I probably would not be here today. That decision was not made in haste. That decision was made with careful reflection. It is very ironic that I can stand in this House today and am able to say that I represent my constituents in the same House where the decision was made to send overseas the troops that liberated my mother, my father and my oldest brother. For that I will always be grateful to Canada and its young men and women who sacrificed so much so that we could be free.

It is ironic and rather pleasing, actually, to see the defence minister of Canada stand up at a board of trade in a business meeting and say that the military requires more resources, but I have yet to hear him make that declaration in the House so that all of Canada can hear precisely what he is saying.

His statement, by the way, is very reflective of today's motion. It was very vague and there is a lot of wiggle room in this motion. It is simply unacceptable that he would use that type of language to ascertain the current situation of our military, but I am pleased that he will go to his cabinet and fight for more resources, as he says, with all the spending priorities out there. I only wish that the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans had the same fortitude to fight for the men and women of our Coast Guard in the same manner.

I do not believe we have to increase taxes to do this either, because by replacing the Sea Kings and the vessels of our country, for example, there would be so many people going back to work making high salaries that the taxes would pay themselves. It is not an expenditure. It is an investment. This is what we need in this country.

I am surprised by those who talk about sovereignty, those who want to send troops to East Timor or Kosovo or around the world. I remind them that peacekeeping means very well that peacekeepers must use lethal force if they have to. They have to be combat trained for peacekeeping. That means they must have the resources in place to be properly trained and be effective when they are out in the field.

On behalf of our party, I salute the men and women of our military. We support our veterans and those who have come back from overseas. We will support our reservists and those who are thinking of the military as a career. We want them to know that they have our support, not only of this party but of all members of the House of Commons.

*Supply*

• (1530)

**Mrs. Cheryl Gallant (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, it has always been a pleasure to serve with this hon. member on the Standing Committee on National Defence and Veterans Affairs. His message has been consistent and this is one issue on which the opposition is united. I was wondering if the member would give us his thoughts on the issue of the supply chain project.

**Mr. Peter Stoffer:** Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member from the Alliance Party, who is an active member on the committee, for this very important question. In brief, the supply chain consists of all services and materials supplied to the military from within, the nuts, the bolts and everything else.

The government has entered into a sort of preliminary contract with a company called Tibbett & Britten, of England, to look at the privatization of that supply chain, which basically means we would “war-mart”, or sort of Wal-Mart, our military supply chain. That is simply unacceptable. The fact is that over \$800 million would then be transferred to a foreign company. This is completely unacceptable. We have 1,674 public service workers attached to the supply chain now, who are working very proudly, I may say. Some people call them the invisible force of the military, the fourth arm, as well as our men and women who are attached as spouses to the military.

Just as important, there are over 3,000 businesses across the country that supply the military and its bases, from Gander, from Renfrew, from Esquimalt, from Shearwater and so on. These are small businesses that need this business with the military in order to survive.

To privatize it means that Tibbett & Britten of England can get those supplies from anywhere in the world and thus knock out many of these businesses and the hopes and dreams of many people who work in those businesses. It is simply unacceptable. We in the NDP and others, I am sure, are saying that it should not be privatized, that it should remain a public service. I am sure that when the government finishes its review it will find out that indeed is the way to go.

**Mr. John O'Reilly (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I do not mean to rise in response to members every time something is said, but I do want to correct the record. Tibbett & Britten Group Canada is a Canadian company.

**An hon. member:** A shell company.

**Mr. John O'Reilly:** Five Canadian companies bid on this process and responded to the contracts. They were all Canadian companies. No foreign companies bid on the process, so I just wonder if the member would stand corrected. I know that there is a lot of work going on right now and I would not defend the change to the supply chain yet, because I have not been convinced that there are savings there. When I am convinced I will take a look at it.

I think the member should acknowledge that TBG is a Canadian company.

• (1535)

**Mr. Peter Stoffer:** Mr. Speaker, I hate to rise every time I hear the parliamentary secretary make a mistake, but the reality is that Tibbett

& Britten is a British firm with corporations and companies within Canada. It is still a British company. That is like calling Shell Canada a Canadian company. It is not. It is owned and operated, eventually, by Royal Dutch/Shell in Holland. The fact of it is that it is a franchise of Tibbett & Britten in England and the profits, like Chrysler's, like GM's and like Ford's, eventually leave this country and end up in another country. That is simply unacceptable.

We in the NDP have always believed in a strong public service. We believe that the public service excels. We believe that it does excellent work within the military and in the supply chain. We simply do not agree with the concept of alternate service delivery or giving away jobs so that other people can eventually do them much cheaper with no benefits and no guarantee of quality or of work. We will not accept that the supply chain should be privatized in any way, shape or form.

**Mr. Peter MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough, PC):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to take part in this debate and to follow my colleague from Nova Scotia, who is a diligent defender of the military, as is the mover of the motion, the member for Saint John. She has consistently and persistently been a champion for the men and women of the Canadian armed forces.

For a number of reasons I am pleased to take part in this debate. The motion itself is one which I think sheds a dismal light on the current record of the Liberal government with respect to the Canadian armed forces. I believe there are a number of issues that arise from that record and have to be identified, but more important, where do we go from here? What do we do to improve the lives of and the situation for our men and women in the armed forces?

As it has been noted, we are preparing this week to recognize our veterans on November 11. It is a great reminder of the incredible sacrifice that the men and women of the armed forces have made over the course of our country's long and proud history. For it was on the fields and blood-soaked beaches of Europe and other foreign lands that Canada earned its hard-fought and formidable reputation. The theme for this year's Veterans' Week, which officially begins tomorrow, is “Remembering Our Past, Preserving Our Future”. It is a fitting theme and one to which I would encourage government members in particular to pay close attention.

Time and time again we have heard members of the Canadian armed forces, members of the opposition, Senate committees, former generals and, most recently, even the Minister of National Defence discuss the need for greater funding for our military. The shape in which the government has left our forces in the past number of years gives me pause to reflect on and question the very future of our military. As we look this week at the past achievements of veterans across the great nation in which we live, as we recognize the sacrifices they made in our stead, as we enjoy the freedoms that were afforded to us because of those sacrifices, we should also look to the future and we should do everything we possibly can to address the most dangerous shortfall in defence spending that the country has faced in years.

### *Supply*

The sad reality is that the current Prime Minister and his record are sort of the political equivalent of a posthole digger. I say that because the more he takes away, the bigger the hole becomes, and the bigger the hole becomes, the more ground that will have to be made up by the military. This situation, this atrophy that has occurred within the military, is going to take some time to remedy. It is not going to be one big budgetary influx that will allow our military to make up the lost ground.

Some of the startling statistics have already been put on the record but bear repeating. The current Auditor General's report suggests, and this is based on a defence analysis which goes into some detail, that the operational budget of the Canadian armed forces is facing shortfalls of approximately \$1.3 billion a year. That, added to the knowledge that we have about \$7 billion that has been removed from the Canadian military budget since the government came to office, is truly startling when one looks on the other side of the equation, at how much the military has been able to accomplish, not because of the government but in spite of the government.

The ability of the men and women of the Canadian armed forces to adapt and to do more with less, and the ability that they have to recognize the importance of the task that they have been given, is once again cause for us to stop and reflect and give praise to those brave individuals.

Defence spending has been reduced by 23%, or 30% in real terms, during the government's tenure. Personnel levels have fallen by almost 18,000 since 1993. Reservists have fallen by almost 10,000 during that same time period. The army lost a brigade group of 6,200 reservists and has faced regular personnel problems given the high operational tempo of the last decade. The navy lost 3,500 sailors. The air force lost 7,100 members and went from 260 combat aircraft to 140 and from 128 armed helicopters to 30. The Canadian Forces is facing acute shortages in specialized trades, including pilots, engineers, doctors and various technical trades. Defence spending fell from 1.7% of GDP in 1994 to the current 1.1% today, ranking seventeenth in NATO.

• (1540)

This is all factual statistic information that is not partisan. It is simply information of which Canadian should be made aware. Despite the obvious need, which even the Minister of National Defence has now acknowledged, the department likely will not receive a substantial infusion of resources, given the efforts by the new finance minister to downplay the expectations and the Prime Minister's skewed priorities and pathetic look for some sort of legacy.

After being starved for resources by the government and while facing increasing demands, the Canadian Forces are likely to be victimized again as the internal leadership and the legacy politics of the Liberal Party will obviously trump the need of our soldiers.

This is all to say that when the budget does come down in February, March or whenever the government gets around to doing it, even with all this information available and with the outcry from the many groups, including armed forces personnel have made, it would appear that this is simply not registering.

The federal government has overlooked the needs of the Canadian armed forces for so long, yet we continue to see the human effects that this partisan and callous decision making process by the government has had. A majority of the equipment is in need of upgrading and replacement. The men and women are forced to operate on shoestring budgets.

One of the most heart-rending and gut wrenching experiences I have had as a member of Parliament was when I was approached by a former member of the military who came to my office. He literally had tears in his eyes as he discussed the shame and the lack of morale the armed forces personnel faced when they had to go into a combat zone in Afghanistan with forest green uniforms in a desert setting. He discussed the danger in which that put them and the target that they represented as they stood out in those forest green uniforms against a desert background. The solution of the government was to send them capes, or that they borrow uniforms from the personnel of other countries or that they take paint and put it on their uniforms.

We have a manufacturer, Wear Well Garments, headed by Stirling MacLean. Mr. MacLean offered quite generously to shut down his operations and to manufacture those uniforms if the Canadian government would provide the material and the specs that were needed. That was denied. That would have allowed them to have uniforms in very short order to address this obvious shortcoming and negligent decision that was made by the department.

The lack of funds and the continual use of aging material prevents replacement and long term repair. Just the upkeep also becomes extremely expensive. We need only look at the record of the government in terms of the aging Sea King helicopters. These helicopters spend far more time undergoing repairs than they do in the air. As the senate committee on Canadian security and military preparedness found, the level of funding for national defence is insufficient to meet the many tasks assigned to our military.

The Sea King helicopter program has become the symbol of just how bad it is. The cancellation of that program alone cost over \$500 million without factoring in the benefits that would have come from taking delivery of those helicopters, the component parts that would have been made by EH-101 in Canada and the profits that would have been made from future sales of that type of helicopter. It would have been the state of the art equipment at the forefront, at the vanguard of that type of military equipment, the helicopter. Yet here we are 10 years later still looking for the replacement that would lead to the ability of our armed forces to not only carry out their responsibilities, but to pick up the slack for some of the other decisions that were made that are associated to the shortcomings.

We no longer have the degree of capability in our coast guard. The government chose to disband the ports police. All of this to say that it leaves our ports and our coastal communities even more vulnerable. The Sea King fleet is unable to address that shortcoming. In fact they have to live with those problems as well.

*Supply*

The Auditor General, who is an impartial observer of Parliament, an investigator, an individual who all parliamentarians respect to do the good work of being a watch guard for the government in an impartial way, both the Senate and House of Commons defence committees, academics, defence analysts and individuals from across the country have called for additional funding of at least \$2 billion in the yearly operating budget to maintain the levels that they currently operate.

● (1545)

Our armed forces participate in many missions around the world and it is clear that there is a cost in terms of vulnerability, respect and capability, given the current state of equipment and funding. Under the substantial financial strain, our military has been forced to do more with less on a daily basis. This has led to a serious deterioration in that equipment and also in the morale.

I spoke earlier about the individual who had approached me about the morale and the shame they felt when on international missions. They work shoulder to shoulder with other countries and they look at their equipment by comparison. They look at their uniforms. They look at the missions with which they have been tasked. They have to ask the serious question as to why their own government would leave them in this situation.

That is not to say that our men and women do not do their job admirably, with great pride and incredible ability, perhaps even more so given the situation in which they are left. Our record as peacekeepers has been as strong as any country in the free world. It is something of which Canadians are proud. It is something that defines us as a country. However the lack of attention paid by the government has left us unable to perform in the current global environment.

Our current military faces great difficulties of being ill-equipped due to sizeable cuts in its defence budget. A year after September 11, it has become painfully obvious that we are slipping in our ability to not only contribute to international peacekeeping and protection missions but even in our ability to maintain security at home. There is a great overlap between the issues of internal security and domestic preparedness, as well as our ability to partake in response to emergencies.

We know that a number of environmental disasters have occurred in Canada that have required the military to intervene. We saw that with the floods in Manitoba and in the Saguenay region. We saw that with the ice storm in Ontario and in Quebec. We know that there have been occasions where the military has stepped in and done an incredible job, for which we have to give it the greatest credit in the world, given its current stretched resources.

An increase the defence budget is obviously needed to reaffirm Canada's commitment to our men and women who take so seriously the defence of this great nation, both at home and abroad.

Between 1993 and 1998, the current member for LaSalle—Émard, the former finance minister, tabled budgets that led to a 23% cut in the defence budget. This figure comes from the Council for Canadian Security in the 21st Century. I find this figure almost unbelievable. Yet while the former finance minister was at the helm, the DND budget dropped to \$9.4 billion in 1998-99 and from \$12

billion in 1993-94. These cuts represent a trend of an ongoing lack of attention to this important issue.

These drastic cuts have had a very detrimental impact on the military at a number of levels, not the least of which is this steady decline in the numbers who enrol, who participate and who choose to make the armed forces a career; a very distinguished career that it can be. Official department estimates put the trained effective strength of the Canadian armed forces at somewhere between 50,000 and 55,000, well below the currently mandated 60,000.

I have already mentioned the drops in defence spending as a per capita percentage of GDP, falling from 1.7% to the current 1.1%, ranking seventeenth among our NATO counterparts.

Blame for the desperate state of our armed forces lies directly with the government, including the member for LaSalle—Émard, for it was during his tenure that there were a number of choices that had to be made. While all budgets underwent change, the drastic cuts to the defence budget put our personnel and our country at risk.

While he tours the country, speaking of the democratic deficit, he should take a while to reflect on the deficit that he created not only in the military but also in our international reputation, in health care and here in Parliament when he stood and voted against his own words on a number of occasions.

● (1550)

In the red book he talked about having an ethics counsellor who would report to the House. He voted against that on two occasions. He voted against his own words most recently last week in a Bloc motion. There is a credibility deficit when we look at the record and the words of the member for LaSalle—Émard. These are just a few morsels that I refer to when it comes to his record and when it comes to the actions of that member.

I mentioned earlier in my remarks the decision taken by the government to disband the ports police. Under the current funding scheme for our armed forces, there is an even greater emphasis put on the lack of security that exists at our borders. By that I also include our ports. We have witnessed this disregard for safety by the government for a number of years.

I want to spend just a few minutes concentrating on the situation regarding the ports police. There is a direct correlation between the shortcomings, the availability and the capability of our military at ports coupled with this decision that was taken by the government. This is a trend that has been very evident to even the casual observer for a number of years. It is simply not a priority for the government.

*Supply*

When the standing committee on national security and defence issued its report on Canadian security and military preparedness, it included an examination of Canadian ports. I brought this to the attention of the minister back in November of 1997 when I rose in the House to address concerns over the disbanding of the ports police and what it would mean for Canadians and their security. Ports policing is a very specialized responsibility. At that time I told those in attendance that, for all intents and purposes, many of our ports would be open for business in terms of illegal drugs, gun trade and other types of illicit materials.

The disbandment of the ports police leads to greater vulnerability and infiltration for terrorist organizations. When the government disbanded that special unit, in essence it completely got rid of a specialized police force with specific training and extensive authority empowered throughout the Criminal Code, customs and immigration. This was again undoubtedly done at perhaps a great saving in the budget but at huge cost to the Canadian taxpayers in terms of security.

The Minister of National Defence has now admitted in the House and publicly that there is a problem. As the old saying goes, admitting there is a problem is perhaps the first step to remedying it. In this instance we know that the first step in remedying that will require a commitment from this minister to now go to the cabinet table and make a strong pitch to have money returned to the budget of the Canadian armed forces. That commitment still is not clear from the remarks today of members and the minister. The sentiment and the attitude that will be required from the government to shift its thinking and to put a greater priority on this subject matter is not clear.

We know a surplus exists, a surplus that has existed for some time in other areas of the budget. The EI fund, as we know, is carrying a huge surplus which comes out of the pay cheques of working men and women in the country. I say with great confidence that those men and women would be glad to see money go to assist in the revitalization and the reinvigoration of our armed forces.

While the Liberal Party may try to triumph the obvious need that now exists, what it needs to do is act. The Progressive Conservative Party supports providing immediate funds to our military. We are committed to initiatives that would secure our military's future. As we debate this issue today, I urge the defence minister and cabinet ministers opposite to revisit this issue at the cabinet table with diligence. While we spend next week remembering our veterans and our past, let us do all we can to necessitate and ensure that we preserve our future.

•(1555)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Loyola Hearn (St. John's West, PC):** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I believe you would find unanimous consent for the following motion:

That at the conclusion of the present debate on the opposition motion, all questions necessary to dispose of this motion be deemed put, a recorded division deemed requested and deferred until Tuesday, November 5, 2002, at 3:00 p.m.

[*English*]

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair):** The House has heard the terms of the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Mr. John O'Reilly (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I listened to the member for Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough with great interest. He has moved back a few seats from where he used to sit and is looking at leadership. I notice that he has a milder approach to his parliamentary decorum. Now he tends to be praising people instead of denigrating them. I am pleased to see, if he is running for the leadership of his party, that he certainly is taking a look at that demeanour.

However he seems to fear the member for LaSalle—Émard. He quoted a number of things that do not ring true in my mind. Maybe he has not read the budgets of 1999, 2000 and 2001 where the Government of Canada offered significant increases in defence funding which, through fiscal year 2006-07, would be more than \$5 billion. I do not know how he squares that circle by saying that the member for LaSalle—Émard has somehow cut back when in fact he is responsible for an increase in the last three budgets that he did.

We were pleased to ensure that we lobbied the then finance minister to increase military funding so that it would not erode any more than it has. This is not to say that more is not needed, but I believe that he should recognize that.

**Mr. Peter MacKay:** Mr. Speaker, speaking of squares, I want to address the hon. member opposite because he took a moment to make what was a weak attempt at sarcasm or humour, but it is too important an issue. If he wants to be economical with the truth about his government and the man he worships, that is his illusion and his delusion.

During that member's time, the member for LaSalle—Émard took \$7 billion away from the military. The member speaks of the 2000-01 budget. Defence spending was reduced by a full 23%. The facts speak for themselves. That came from the Auditor General's report. He ought to take some time and read up on these issues before he gets up in the House and embarrasses himself.

•(1600)

**Mr. Roy Bailey (Souris—Moose Mountain, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, as we near November 11 Canadians should have some idea as to what this country did and where we were at in 1945. In 1945 we had half the population we have now, but we put one million people into uniform. We had the third largest army, air force and navy among the Allies.

Having said that, Canadians should know that we are placing the responsibility of the military in the hands of relatively few people, 10% or less today than we had then. We cannot seem to find consensus out there among the general population that we are not doing enough. We have not even reached 60,000. I would like the member to comment on those figures.

**Mr. Peter MacKay:** Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his intervention. He is right to point out that during the 1940s when Canada was at war we had over a million men and women in uniform. Today, we have somewhere in the range of 52,000. The reserves have dropped significantly by 10,000. There is a problem with recruiting. There is a problem maintaining our presence overseas and maintaining our operational budget. That goes directly to the issue. It goes directly to the reason why we have chosen to make this a priority in this debate today.

The Progressive Conservative Party has always been a strong backer of the military. We made the last major investment with respect to the new frigate program, which is now over 10 years old. It is going to require refits very soon. We made the last major investment for LAVs. We had signed on for the purchase of military helicopters. All of that good work was undone in the last decade by the government.

Try as it might it suggests that things are not as bad and that somehow it is now a priority 10 years after the fact. By talking to men and women in the armed forces and the reserves, they will say what it is like. Members should visit an armed forces base and talk to individuals who must live daily with the carnage that has been wreaked by the government, and then forget about all the statistics because it is there, it is real, it is in our faces. There will be a time when there will be a reckoning for that. I hope that at the very least this next budget will reflect a recognition and a respect for the men and women in the armed forces.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Antoine Dubé (Lévis-et-Chutes-de-la-Chaudière, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I agree with a lot of what the hon. member for Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough said in his discussion of needs, particularly with respect to the frigates and other equipment.

However, today's motion seeks to increase military spending. In our view, this motion lacks precision, and vision.

I would be in favour of having more maritime equipment in the riding of Lévis-et-Chutes-de-la-Chaudière, as the hon. member knows. We both represent ridings with a shipyard, he on the Atlantic coast, and I on the St. Lawrence River.

Given how important this issue is to him, would he agree to have a debate in this place so that we can review the national defence policy, even develop a new one if need be, before we get into any discussion of budget planning?

• (1605)

[*English*]

**Mr. Peter MacKay:** Mr. Speaker, just by way of explanation to my hon. friend, and I thank him for the question and understand his point, we drafted the motion by taking the words from the current defence minister's speech. That has been done in the past and members opposite are still never hesitant to vote against their own words. They have proven that time and time again. That was the way the specific motion was drafted.

I could not agree more that there has to be a complete revisitation of how we are spending money. Perhaps we should have a locked-in budget for a bare minimum of spending. Perhaps we should look at the way in which military contracts are awarded. We need to put

### *Supply*

greater emphasis on shipbuilding and frigates. We have purchased submarines. We have submarines that should not go down and helicopters that should not go up. That is the sad reality of where we are today with our military equipment on those two important files.

There could be more done to protect the coast and improve personnel and equipment. I could not agree more that this is something the Parliament of Canada should be fully engaged in and giving greater priority to.

**Mr. Peter Stoffer (Sackville—Musquodoboit Valley—Eastern Shore, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my hon. colleague from Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough. I will ask a simple question in terms of our reserves. Many reservists come from universities and other jobs. These are young men and women who are looking at the military as a possible long term career. I would like to have the member's perspective, because he has reservists in his riding, of what they are telling him they require from the government to make that decision in the future.

**Mr. Peter MacKay:** Mr. Speaker, in a word or two, hope and encouragement. I speak with individuals like Colonel Doug Stallard in the riding of Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough. I have attended events that celebrate the work done by reservists and by army and sea cadets who operate within our armed forces. They are already choosing at an early age to make that commitment to our armed forces. These are great training grounds for future men and women who will serve this country proudly.

We should do more to give incentives, scholarships, or perhaps more in the way of support for their education. I could not agree more with the hon. member for Sackville—Musquodoboit Valley—Eastern Shore that we should be embracing the opportunities to enhance the reserve's role in the military to ensure that they can make a smooth transition into regular forces should they choose to do so. That is a priority in many countries and it is something that is sadly slipping away in this country.

**Mr. David Pratt (Nepean—Carleton, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to participate in the debate this afternoon. First, I would like to pay tribute to the hon. member for Saint John for her commitment to the military, to members of the Canadian Forces and to veterans.

Over in the corner I see my colleague from the defence committee, the member for Sackville—Musquodoboit Valley—Eastern Shore, who also deserves a lot of credit for some of the things that have been coming out of the defence committee. He certainly has displayed what I would describe as an independence of thought within his party as far as defence and security issues are concerned. Sometimes it is hard swimming against the current but he has done that remarkably well over the course of the last few years.

Both those members deserve credit for their concern with respect to the state of our military.

The motion before us, which stands in the name of the member for Saint John, for whom I have tremendous respect, reads:

### *Supply*

That this House condemn the government for continuing to overstretch our military personnel and call on the government to increase spending more than is currently planned, as the Canadian Forces need more money simply to continue operating in a sustainable way.

For the benefit of those who may be watching the debate, the fact that the motion contains the word “condemn” means that it is a non-confidence motion. It is a vote with respect to confidence in the government. From that standpoint, it certainly raises the hair on the back of the neck of the people on this side of the House.

I should also say, and this is not a reflection on the member's drafting skills, but I know what was intended here. It was to take a fragment of a speech given by the Minister of National Defence and turn it into a motion, presuming of course that members of the government would be embarrassed by having to vote against the words of the Minister of National Defence.

I believe one of the reasons the defence committee has been relatively successful in terms of getting its point across with respect to the state of the military and the conditions faced by members of the Canadian Forces, is that we have taken, by and large, a fairly non-partisan attitude to the subject.

As well as the two members I mentioned before, there were other members of the defence committee from the Alliance, and even from the Bloc, who kept an open mind with respect to approaching these issues and who made a generally constructive contribution to the debate on the future of the forces.

I want to inform the House that personally I would have preferred a much more non-partisan motion that members from both sides of this House could get behind, as far as an expression of support for the military and an encouragement to the government to increase the budget for the Department of National Defence in the upcoming budget that we expect in February.

As a matter of fact, I had come up with some wording: “That the House strongly encourages the government to continue to increase the base budget of the Canadian Forces to help ensure the protection of Canadian sovereignty and to allow Canada to make greater contributions to international peace and security”. I believe that would have been a decent motion and one which I think most members of the House could have supported. I do not know whether it was lack of time or lack of consideration on this but some of the folks on the other side did not feel it was appropriate, I suppose, to support the motion. I find that regrettable.

I would encourage the members on the other side to reduce the level of partisanship that we have on this issue. If they are partisan toward us, we could be equally partisan toward them and, ultimately, that does not accomplish the goal of better public policy. I believe that very strongly.

● (1610)

I hope that at some point in the future the House will be able to reform itself to the point where we do not look at issues on a partisan basis, but that from time to time we look at the issue from the standpoint of the objective reality of the situation, when what is best for the men and women of the Canadian Forces rather than what is best for our particular party, or what is the best political tactic or strategy at any given moment.

The other point I want to make is that there has been additional funding for the Canadian military over the last number of years. For instance, about \$3.9 billion in new funding went into the military over the course of the 1999 and 2000 budgets and more than \$1.2 billion in the last budget.

We dealt with some of these issues at the defence committee in terms of the funding issue. We were concerned that some of the money that was coming in from an operational standpoint to deal with operational deficits, for instance, was not adding significantly to the base budget and there was a need for more money for the base budget. The base budget has increased somewhat but not to the extent that we on the defence committee felt was appropriate.

I draw the House's attention to the fact that if we look at the overall funding that has gone to defence from the year 2001 to what is expected in 2006-07, because there are increases built in over the next couple of years that are anticipated, the increased funding works out to about \$5.1 billion. Again, some of that has been the flow through money and some has been for disaster relief for the provinces. However some of it does not add specifically to the capability of the Canadian Forces. Again, this is something that has been recognized by the Auditor General, by various groups involved in defence, such as the Conference of Defence Associations and the Council for Canadian Security in the 21st Century, by our committee and by the committee in the other place.

Another thing that is worth pointing out is that some of the money that has gone into the military over the course of the past few years has been as a direct result of some of the work that has been done by the standing committee. I would draw members' attention to the quality of life initiatives that have been announced by the government and which I must say have been very well received by the members of the Canadian Forces.

The strength of any military clearly rests with those who serve. This is why the government has taken these steps to improve the conditions of military service by enhancing the quality of life, not just of the members of the Canadian Forces but other families as well.

We have seen the pay increases that have come about over the last couple of years. We have seen housing concerns addressed. The government has also introduced special benefits and allowances, such as improved maternity and parental leave benefits. Pension Act amendments, which were of immediate assistance to about 1,200 Canadian Forces members with permanent service related disabilities, were also very important steps forward.

One of the things that struck me when I had the great opportunity and honour of visiting Canadian troops abroad was that they were able to stay in touch with their families in a more substantive way than they were in the past through access to the Internet and e-mails and long distance telephone.

Employment assistance programs have been put in place to assist spouses whose careers are often disadvantaged because of frequent moves.



*Supply*

As far as the daily lives of the members of the Canadian Forces, these sorts of improvements were very significant. I remember travelling with some of my colleagues from this side of the House, as well as from the other side of the House, to various bases across the country, right from Esquimalt through to Goose Bay and Halifax. We touched down in places like Moose Jaw, Edmonton, Petawawa and Valcartier. We talked to a tremendous number of people, both on and off the record, with respect to the conditions of service in the military. From that standpoint we listened, we made substantive, concrete and, I think, positive recommendations and those recommendations were listened to.

● (1615)

From that standpoint I would give full credit to the previous minister of national defence who did a tremendous job on the quality of life issue and who understood, better than most, that having the right people and maintaining the morale of those people is absolutely critical to any military organization.

Some military theorists say that there are three things to a military: people, ideas and equipment, in that order. I think the former minister of national defence certainly had his priorities right when he concentrated a lot of effort and a significant amount of political capital, not just himself but with the involvement of committee, in terms of the quality of life improvements.

I also want to speak to some of the modernization programs that the Canadian Forces has undertaken recently. There is a continuing commitment to the issue of maintaining multipurpose combat capable forces that are capable of performing the complex and varied tasks that have been assigned to them, whether it is ensuring the safety of Canadians, the security of the North American continent or international peace and security in general.

In recent years the government has shown its commitment to modernization, maybe not as much as we would have liked from the standpoint of the defence committee certainly, through a series of initiatives aimed at modernizing the Canadian Forces. Thanks to these initiatives, the Canadian Forces is better equipped now than it was a decade ago in terms of the level of sophistication and the level of lethality of some of the systems with which it is working.

One of the major improvements on the maritime side has been the acquisition of the Victoria class, previously known as the Upholder class, submarines.

I would like to take a moment to talk about those submarines. It is really a shame what has been said in some quarters of the media with respect to these submarines. I think they have been badly labelled as lemons. Some of the commentary that has been attached to the submarines in terms of suggesting that they are unsafe and that Canadian crews have next to mutinied and have refused to go to sea on them, has been completely inaccurate. It is a disservice to the people who are working on the submarine project and to the men and women of the Canadian Forces generally.

One of the things that concerns me is that a very positive aspect of an acquisition program, of very sophisticated equipment, has been basically maligned unfairly and has not been accurately portrayed.

I hope the defence department is listening to this because I really think it is time for us to start talking about these submarines and the

capability they add to Canada's naval forces and the future of these submarines in terms of other operations.

Some people would ask why Canada has submarines. The answer, quite simply, is that approximately 600 submarines are out wandering the world's oceans. Some of them are nuclear submarines and some are diesel-electric, the more conventional type of submarines that exist. One of the reasons Canada needs submarines, in my view, is that we need an on the water, above the water and below the water capability to ensure that Canada's maritime interests are protected in the widest sense of the word.

I am not trying to underplay that there have been certain issues related to some of the technical details of these submarines, such as the problems with the ejector and diesel exhaust valves. We all know about the publicized dent in the HMCS *Victoria*. I went to Halifax to look at the submarines and had a look at the so-called major dent in the submarine. It is about this deep and this wide on a submarine that is, I am guessing, at least 150 feet long. Ships bump into things from time to time in docks and clearly that is what happened with the HMCS *Victoria*. It is not a big issue when talking about the cost of repairing it and the cost of the submarines in general.

● (1620)

Let us look at the cost, because it is another important issue. We paid roughly \$750 million for these submarines. We essentially traded the costs for the use of Suffield, Alberta, by British forces. It was one of the most creative, forward thinking and positive acquisition programs that I have seen in relation to equipment in some time, but the fact remains that these subs are not going to go to sea unless they are right up to scratch in terms of Canadian standards. They absolutely have to be completely seaworthy and they will be by the time the project is completed.

Another point that is worth mentioning is that the cost of bringing these submarines up to Canadian standards and making them seaworthy is going to be borne largely by the government of the United Kingdom. That is an important point to make. These submarines are as complicated and as sophisticated in terms of the technology as any aircraft we will find. They have to go through the same checklist of standards across the board to ensure that they are perfectly up to Canadian standards and perfectly safe for the crews that are going to be using those submarines.

I wanted to touch on that because I think our subs have gotten a bad rap. They are going to be critical pieces of equipment, for instance in terms of surveillance of our coastal areas. I was looking through some old material on this just last week and noted a figure that really struck home with me. One of these subs, with the sophisticated listening equipment, the radar and the communications package that goes with it, will be able to control or at least know what is happening in an area of roughly 125,000 square miles. That is very significant. It is a capability we need and it is a capability that I think is going to be put to use very well with the submarine program.

*Supply*

Certainly I would like to touch upon a number of other issues, but one point I would like to make is this. Obviously our new defence minister's words were quoted in the context of the motion we have before us today, but I would like to pay tribute to our Minister of National Defence. Coming from an economic background with very little in the way of background as far as the military is concerned, he really has brought himself up to speed and I think he has become one of the strongest advocates we have in the government for the Canadian Forces. I think we are going to see some great things from this minister in the future. As well, and it is important to mention this, I think he is going to be successful in terms of getting more money in the budget for the Canadian Forces come February.

There are a couple of other things I should mention. Why should we put more money into the military at this time? We all know that the world is a pretty dangerous place these days. We have commitments in various places in the world, obviously in Bosnia. It is my understanding that the minister may be going to Bosnia. I am hoping to accompany him within the next little while to visit Canadian troops in the theatre of operations and to express on behalf of Canadians the level of confidence we have in the work they are doing.

There obviously is a lot more that I could say on this subject but my time is running short. Let me leave members with one simple thought. As a Parliament, I think we have to come together in a non-partisan way in terms of dealing with the issue of the Canadian Forces and the things that we expect of them. The Canadian Forces, the Department of National Defence, is not a department like any other department of government. It has very special responsibilities that go right to the heart of our sovereignty, right to the heart of protecting everything we value as Canadians, and also right to the heart of projecting those values internationally in terms of our contributions to international peace and security. Let me end my comments there. I would be happy to respond to any questions members may have.

• (1625)

**Mrs. Betty Hinton (Kamloops, Thompson and Highland Valleys, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, it was not my intention to join in this debate today. I was quite satisfied to listen, but some of the comments that have come from the other side have forced me to stand.

I have a legislative assistant in my office who is also a reservist. Not only do I invite the member, but I would actually encourage the member to come to my office and spend 15 minutes with this young man. I think he would get an earful.

The member said that the government has done all these good things for the military but as for the uniforms it gave to the military during the desert action, it might as well have painted a bull's eye on the backs of those men. As well, in many cases the wheels have fallen off the trucks and we have to rent equipment to haul the cannon up to the hill for gun salutes. One thousand men have been paid to sit because there is no funding for the training. These are all things that have not been addressed.

When I have the member across the way say to me that he does not like the word "condemn", that he finds it very strong wording and therefore will not be able to support the motion, I have to ask

why in the world he is here. The word "condemn" is strong because nothing has happened on the government side of the House for the military and those on this side of the House are very concerned about the way things are going.

You mentioned sovereignty earlier, sir. Do you not understand that sovereignty is dependent on a healthy, well funded military?

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair):** Please address your comments to the Speaker.

**Mr. David Pratt:** Mr. Speaker, I certainly have not seen this member anywhere close to the defence committee, but nonetheless I take her comments. I too have spoken to many reservists. People have expressed to me concerns about various aspects of service and the government has listened. It is in the process of trying to deal with many of the concerns that have been expressed. I fully expect that we are going to see some improvements in the next budget.

I wanted to make this comment in my previous remarks. I should have added as well that as for some of the money that went into the issue of security immediately after September 11, much of that money was dedicated toward the border issue and preserving Canada's economic lifeline with the United States but also to intelligence. We work very closely with our allies on intelligence issues. We have beefed up our intelligence capabilities. The government is very concerned about protecting Canadians and certainly about protecting Canada's interests abroad.

To say as the hon. member has said, that I would get an earful from the particular reservist, we have heard from a lot of people. A lot of them have said that some positive things have happened in the military. Not everything has been a bowl of cherries, not by any stretch of the imagination, but I think the government is making a very honest attempt to try to deal with some of those problems and to ensure that our people in uniform are well equipped and well trained for all the jobs we give them. I would add as well that in my view we have never sent Canadian troops into a theatre of operations, and I have spoken to a lot of commanding officers, without the training or without the equipment they need to do the job.

• (1630)

**Mrs. Elsie Wayne (Saint John, PC):** Mr. Speaker, I want to say to my hon. colleague who happens to be the chair of the defence committee, and I think all of my colleagues here should know, that when the hon. member from the Alliance Party mentioned the word "condemn", I had agreed that I would remove that. I would support removing the word "condemn" and putting in "strongly recommend". I have no problem with that. The only problem I had is that those on the government side wanted the whole motion changed. As the member knows, I will not play politics when it comes to the military. I absolutely refuse to do it.

I say to my colleagues on the government side that if the word "condemn" is changed to "strongly recommend", I am fine and dandy with it. I am sure my other colleagues are too because we want to do what is right for the military. So I ask my colleagues to just take another look because all I did was quote their minister.

Another thing I want to say is this. On those submarines that we bought—

**An hon. member:** They should have been built in Saint John.

*Supply*

**Mrs. Elsie Wayne:** Yes, they should have been built in Saint John, but if those submarines were okay, then how come, I ask my hon. colleague, the military in London, England did not keep them for its navy? How come they turned around and said that is it? How come we have just paid \$8.5 million—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair):** The hon. member for Nepean—Carleton.

**Mr. David Pratt:** Mr. Speaker, let me answer that last question first. It is well known, certainly I think in most defence circles, why the United Kingdom did not decide to maintain these subs as operational components of the U.K. navy. These subs were designed and built in the 1980s and intended to cover what is known as the GIUK gap, the Greenland-Iceland-United Kingdom gap. They were to be placed out in the North Atlantic as listening posts, essentially, for the United Kingdom.

The United Kingdom went through a period in the early 1990s when it was cutting back on its military just as we were doing here in Canada. As a matter of fact, the earliest cuts to the military in the 1990s did not come from this government. They came from the Conservative government of Brian Mulroney.

These subs were extremely capable platforms and we acquired them for \$750 million. To give hon. members an example of the cost of building these subs ourselves, the Australians built the Collins class submarines at approximately \$750 million per copy. We got four for \$750 million. I think it is a good deal by any stretch of the imagination, not the least of which is also the fact that from the standpoint of bringing these subs up to operational standards the British are going to be paying for that as well.

• (1635)

**Mr. Peter Stoffer (Sackville—Musquodoboit Valley—Eastern Shore, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, one of my concerns is that the Minister of National Defence has said in the House that, yes, he is looking forward to more resources in the next federal budget but at the same time he is going to give something back. My question to the hon. member is, what is the military supposed to give up in order to maintain those extra resources? Will it be the supply chain? Will it be the tanks? Will it be CF-18s? Will it be Goose Bay and Labrador? What will be cut in order to ascertain additional resources? In essence there may not be any additional resources at all. The government may cut off so much of the military in order to meet so-called new financial resources from the government.

The hon. member is a very learned gentleman when it comes to military affairs in the country and I appreciate his comments, but what is the government going to cut from the military in order to ascertain so-called additional resources?

**Mr. David Pratt:** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the hon. member's comments, but I am certainly not an expert on the military, not by any stretch of the imagination. I think it is important to note that when we have a budget as large as that of the Department of National Defence, with \$12 billion of taxpayers' money, there are always things within that budget that probably could be dropped as far as expenditure items go. The issue of tanks has been raised and I think that is an important issue from the standpoint of how we modernize our forces.

The Minister of National Defence has said that we need a certain amount of money to keep the forces sustainable until we get a major review of defence and foreign policy. He is definitely on the right track there. He is bang on in this situation, because what we need within a defence review is an examination that takes into account the revolution in military affairs and the changing technology of the military. Tanks have been fingered as a possible area where we may cut. The important thing is that right now we are looking at light armoured vehicles that have a significant direct fire capability, which is very important, but there may be other platforms developed, especially by the Americans over the next few years, which will essentially replace the tank with something lighter and more mobile but a platform that is just as lethal.

**Miss Deborah Grey (Edmonton North, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise on the debate today and I would like to thank the PCs for bringing this forward. In some recent polling in Edmonton North an enormous percentage agreed that this was a huge issue. People are very concerned. Post September 11 Canadians are concerned about what goes on with our military and maybe what is not going on with our military. There is an incredible sense of frustration. For those of us who travel a lot there is a real issue of security and maintaining our own sovereignty.

Canada ranks 12th out of 19 NATO countries in its defence spending per capita. With the world's 34th largest population we have the 56th largest regular force and 77th largest reserves. That is unbelievable and I am not sure how a parliamentary secretary would be able to get up and talk about how terrific things are. I do not know that any person would be able to do that.

I would like to go on for quite a little bit about this but I will be splitting my time with the member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca. He represents a large military base as well out on the west coast. I am looking forward to hearing what he has to say.

The Auditor General, who is an amazing person has all kinds of staff that determine some facts and figures, in her 2001 report stated that the Canadian Forces require a minimum of \$1.3 billion added to their budget yearly just to make up for current shortfalls. I am not sure how the minister, the parliamentary secretary, or anyone else can say we need a few of this and a few of that as if they were going to the grocery store.

Some \$1.3 million is needed for current shortfalls let alone any planning ahead. We could talk about submarines or Sea King helicopters again. We have been talking about them for years, as was witnessed last week when I asked a couple of questions of the minister who said he hoped everything would go well so that we would be able to get more equipment. That is just not good enough.

### Supply

The Auditor General also said that to meet equipment replacement requirements over the next five years the capital budget alone would have to be almost doubled in that period from \$6.5 billion to \$11 billion. This is not cheap equipment we are dealing with. Everyone knows that it costs a phenomenal amount of money for light armoured vehicles, helicopters, frigates, or whatever it is. This is intensive spending that the government needs to do. It cannot hope that we can talk about it for 10 years and then everything will show up on time. It is poor planning that continues to go on with a government that lurches from crisis to crisis.

It is the ninth anniversary of the government saying that it would replace the Sea King helicopters. I asked the Prime Minister the other day and the Minister of National Defence if what we were hearing about a procurement date starting officially on January 3 was true. They are not even able to commit to that. We are going to be at a 10 year anniversary with people flying Sea King helicopters that should simply not be there.

In the December 2001 budget the government claimed that it had invested \$5.1 billion in defence since 1999. However we know the true sum. The money was either in tiny sums or committed to specific areas such as specific missions or fixing the Y2K bug. It seems like a few years ago that we had the Y2K scare, but enormous amounts of money went into that to ensure that it did not happen. Funds were also paid back that were advanced to DND, leaving next to nothing for sustaining the military.

It is a frightening thought because if the Liberals are going to get up and say they have spent so much money on the military, I do not know who they are trying to fool. Any of us who have any number of defence people in our areas, folks who are in the military, know that they are talking about quality of life issues, equipment and tours that they are supposed to be on. They are supposed to come home after a tour and be home for  $x$  amount of time, but before they know it they are deployed again because we do not even have enough manpower.

This \$5.1 billion is a bail out. The government makes it sound like it is happy times for everyone and the military is going to get everything it needs. This is simply a bail out and not an investment. Some \$750 million of the purported \$5.1 billion will be added to the DND budget base. So \$750 million out of \$5.1 billion is a far cry from someone standing up and bragging what amazing amounts of money that is. The rest will be used to pay current bills or be transferred to other government agencies or to the provinces. The Auditor General has stated that a quarter of that \$5.1 billion will be spent on non-operational objectives or to service the operations and maintenance deficit.

• (1640)

There is someone over on the Liberal side that talks about the deficit a lot, the democratic deficit. However, when we look at the huge deficit funding there is in the military, it is frightening. The operations and maintenance deficit this year alone is \$1.3 billion according to the Auditor General. A cumulative operations and maintenance deficit will be \$8.4 billion over the five year period, to which the \$5.1 billion will be applied. This is pretty fancy math. The bottom line is it does not add up. There are huge deficits on one side.

The government says it is looking after it, then it turns around and we see serious problems here.

I have been listening to the minister over the last couple of weeks and it is a little difficult to figure out what he is actually saying. On October 24 the minister called my colleague's question regarding more defence funding misguided and apocalyptic. That is in *Hansard*. Mr. Speaker, you were probably here that day to hear the Minister of National Defence answering my colleague saying that we were apocalyptic and insinuating that we were fearmongering about the military. Anyone in the military knows that it is underfunded. For the minister to stand up in the House and say we are misguided or apocalyptic is a bit much.

I do not know what in the world he slept on that night but the very next day, on October 25, the minister gave a speech supporting increased military funding. When asked to clarify his position a couple of days later the minister waffled and said:

—the government at the end of the day will be deciding on the priorities. However, in my humble opinion I submit respectfully that more resources for the military might be one matter the government might consider

Now there is a heavyweight at the cabinet table saying that he hopes everything goes okay and that more money is brought in. That is unbelievable.

In terms of recruitment and retention, the Canadian Forces are not just looking for overall numbers as some Liberals might say, but also the right people for the job. In fact, I would question that the right person for the job is the minister here. I really would. Instead of saying that he hoped things would go okay at the cabinet table, he should be in there fighting. Military personnel would want to know that their cabinet minister was there fighting for them especially when the Auditor General said what unbelievable shortfalls there were. Yet the government refuses to help. It is going to play Russian roulette with the dollars.

The government says it is truly committed to a well funded, well equipped, well maintained and well manned, in terms of manpower and womanpower, military. It says our sovereignty is secure. It can meet our NATO commitments or whatever commitments we have. We could not even send two rounds to Afghanistan. I was there this summer when the troops came home to Edmonton. What a homecoming it was. Those people need rest. They need time off with their families.

Then we see a government that says we are not able to keep up those commitments. That is embarrassing. I would recommend that the government really take note of this.

As the member for Saint John said, it should be happy to change the wording from condemn to strongly recommend. I think there is wisdom in that. A government can only have it one way. It is either going to believe in the military, fund it well, give it good equipment and manpower, ensure that our sovereignty is protected and we are able to meet our deployments and our commitments, or it is not.

I agree with the member for Saint John and strongly recommend this. It is high time that the government gets on with this without talking on the one side about how important it is and on the other side having the cabinet minister say that he hopes things go okay at the cabinet table. We need a stronger representative there for that.

• (1645)

**Mr. John O'Reilly (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I share some military history with the member who just spoke. Training was held in Cold Lake, Alberta for CF-18 pilots to compete in the William Tell competition in Florida. The pilot who ended up winning that competition was from my riding in Ontario. The Americans were so mad they have not held the competition since.

The motion states:

That this House condemn the government for continuing to overstretch our military personnel and call on the government to increase spending more than is currently planned, as the Canadian Forces need more money simply to continue operating in a sustainable way.

An amendment was put forward to change the motion so everyone could be in favour of it. It suggested that the House strongly encourages the government to continue to increase the base budget of the Canadian Forces to help ensure the protection of Canadian sovereignty and to allow Canada to make greater contributions to international peace and security

I wonder if the member would care to comment on why support did not come for that amendment because it is something that all parties—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair):** The hon. member for Edmonton North.

**Miss Deborah Grey:** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the interlude from the parliamentary secretary. I stated earlier something that the defence committee chairman mentioned, and I should have referred to him as the chairman of that committee.

I appreciate that someone from small town Ontario trained at Cold Lake and ended up being the best. That is good news. I congratulate the fellow who won the contest. I spent an hour in a CF-18 in June 1993 with an excellent pilot. There are fabulous people in the military.

The point that the parliamentary secretary and the entire government needs to understand is that these people are terrific in spite of the government, not because of it. Think how much better they could be if they were not nervous about flying, sailing or driving in some of this overly elderly equipment.

The member talked about writing up a completely new, watered down version of a self-congratulating motion saying we are wonderful. There are serious problems with that. The motion brought forward today is not a recommendation to give ourselves a pat on the back and see what else we can do. It is a strong condemnation or sense of concern about what in the world the government is doing. To say that someone talked to two military people and everything is tickety-boo is simply not the case. Members on the government side have bases in their ridings and they know what an unbelievable frustration this is for military personnel.

### *Supply*

There are 58,000 people in the military right now and it is hopelessly undermanned. The Grey Cup will be held in Edmonton at Commonwealth Stadium on Sunday, November 24. The entire military could fit in Commonwealth Stadium leaving thousands of empty seats. There is seating there for about 63,000 people. With our land mass and our shoreline that needs to be protected, and our sovereignty that we talk about, our military would fit inside Commonwealth Stadium. Using that analogy alone tells me that our military is not big enough.

This member should realize that the government should not be patting itself on the back with this kind of amendment it wants to put forward to replace today's opposition motion. When we are that seriously undermanned, underfunded, overdeployed, and have increasing numbers of missions and decreasing amounts of money, then something is seriously wrong. I recommend that the parliamentary secretary go back to the drawing board and see if he can come up with something that is not quite so self-congratulatory.

• (1650)

**Mr. Keith Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to speak to the motion today. This issue is exceedingly important for my riding of Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca because CFB Esquimalt is in my riding.

Some would say that to invest in our military is passé, that it is obsolete, that it is something we do not need because we as a country are firmly in favour of peace and security. Some would say that we should be investing that money in a so-called peace dividend, to invest in economic rehabilitation and the improvement and security of peace in countries far away.

The fact is that sometimes a military is absolutely needed in order to secure peace. Those who would believe that we do not need a military somehow believe in the fantasy that the milk of human kindness flows through the veins of people throughout the world. Those who believe that are ignoring history for there are some very nasty despots around the world who would kill and maim innocent civilians, and indeed would attack Canadians if they had the chance.

Those who believe we are not in danger or that there is not a threat to Canadians because we are “not Americans”, are hopelessly naive. The bombing in Bali is ample evidence to show that these days the world is a more dangerous place than what existed during the cold war. Many of the potential conflicts were being held in a pressure cooker but with the termination of the cold war, the lid is off and the conflicts are happening.

We see terrorism in the Philippines, through the Indonesian archipelago, the Indian subcontinent, through Afghanistan, Saudi Arabia, which in my view is the most unstable area of the Middle East with the exception of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, right through to North Africa. There is a very unstable arch going around more than half the globe which can threaten us here at home. We saw what happened in the United States. Two individuals with one rifle wreaked havoc in the centre of power of the greatest country on the planet.

### *Supply*

Our military is an institution of which we can all be very proud for what it has done and what it will do in the future. It is also essential for the security of all Canadians at home and abroad. Our respect and ability to negotiate on issues, whether they are economic, security or defence issues, are rooted in part in our ability to have a strong, functional, well-trained military that is able to do its part in the complex threats posed around the world.

We also need a military that is able to deal with domestic problems. My colleague from Edmonton and others in the House have eloquently mentioned the problems faced by our armed forces but more discussion is needed on some things that need to be recognized.

Among our NATO partners the average spending is about 2.2% of GDP. We spend 1.1%. That puts us second to the bottom of all our NATO partners. The government would have us believe it is reinvesting in our military and it is, but how much is it investing? How much of it is going to get the military up to speed so that its personnel are well-trained, highly committed and dedicated individuals? They are having a very difficult time doing job that they have been asked to do. They need the financial support, the tools and the training to do the job and they have not been getting that from the government since it was elected in 1993.

The proof of the pudding is quite stark. It is something about which we should all be concerned and embarrassed.

When the government was elected in 1993 there were 88,000 personnel in our armed forces. Now there are 57,000, even less than what it believes is the basic minimum of 60,000. Our party believes that the number should go up to a minimum of 67,000.

As my colleague from Edmonton eloquently said, we cannot keep our armed forces personnel, particularly those in the army and navy, going around and around in the cycle without an opportunity for them to rest and spend time with their families. They have been cycled so rapidly it is having a very devastating effect on their families, on their own personal lives and on their psyches. They are strained beyond the maximum.

• (1655)

In her report the Auditor General said that capital expenditures for the military will have a shortfall of \$46 billion over the next five to 10 years and up to a massive \$11 billion in the next 15 years. That is a huge amount of money. The government said it is putting in \$5.1 billion which is true, but that is spread over five years. In the end when we analyze it, only about \$750 million, almost nothing, will go toward supplies, equipment and training. Supplies, equipment and training are essential.

The public would be shocked to learn that we cannot meet our domestic obligations if there is a threat, a problem or a domestic emergency in Canada. We do not have the basic personnel to meet a domestic emergency, such as an earthquake on the west coast. We cannot allow that to continue. We cannot allow the government to maintain the fantasy and pull the wool over the eyes of the Canadian public by somehow saying that Canadians are secure because our military has the personnel, the tools, the equipment and the training to do the job. It cannot.

For example, our army has not trained since the early 1990s at its minimum amount, which is one battalion strength. There has not been one full training operation in the last 10 years for our military. Not only is that appalling, it is absolutely dangerous.

I represent a naval base in my riding. We desperately need six destroyers over the next five to 10 years. There are no plans to replace the destroyers. This dramatically affects our ability to send our forces abroad and as important, it affects our ability to meet our requirements with our international partners in NATO. It also weakens our ability to negotiate with our colleagues south of the border, which we Canadians should never allow to deteriorate.

With respect to our navy, for the last nine years we have been asking where are the helicopters? Without the helicopters our frigates cannot do the job they have been tasked to do. Their operational effectiveness has been severely hampered.

With respect to our air force, our CF-18s urgently need updates to their weaponry and their communications capabilities. That has not happened.

On a related issue, how has the government treated our armed forces? It gave our armed forces personnel a raise, but what it did not tell the Canadian public is that it ripped that raise away by raising the rents on the private married quarters. That is disgusting. Imagine sending our troops out to war then taking money away from them. The amount is \$69 a month, about \$840 a year. That may not seem like a lot of money to some people, but for someone making \$35,000 a year, it is an awful lot.

In my riding families spend between \$750 to \$1,800 per month for the rent on their private married quarters. The government wants to raise the rents even more. It is doing this with the ludicrous notion of equating the private married quarters to what exists on the outside. That argument is flawed on two grounds. One, our personnel are not paid the same as the public sector and two, there is no equivalence of homes.

In closing, if the government does not reinvest in our military now and acutely invest \$1.5 billion to \$2 billion per year over the next two years, it will be doing a huge disservice to our men and women in uniform who try so very hard to do their job professionally. It will also do a huge disservice to the security of Canada. It will also gut our ability to negotiate with our partners internationally. If we go to the table without paying the piper, we will not have the credibility, whether it is on economic issues, military issues, defence issues or security issues.

Wake up Government of Canada, smell the roses, invest in the Canadian military because it is here for all of us. We owe that to the military at the very least.

## Supply

● (1700)

**Mr. John O'Reilly (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I was in the riding of the member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca on Thanksgiving Day to welcome back the HMCS *Algonquin*. The week before I was in Halifax to say goodbye to the HMCS *Montreal*. Believe me, it is quite a different scene when they are coming back from when they are going out.

To a person, I found very proud, very bright people who had served their country for over six months at sea and were coming back from Operation Apollo. They had been the first ones to capture al-Qaeda. They showed that Canada is playing in the big leagues, making a major contribution in trying to put out the terrorist movement. In fact they had 19 such hails, as they call them, and did a terrific job.

I was disappointed that the member was somewhere else at the time. He and the member for Saanich—Gulf Islands probably should have been there to see how happy people were who were coming into their ridings. I will say that the people out there spoke very highly of the member and said that he generally is at the events and does represent them, so I did not mean that as a slight. It was quite a scene to see people coming back to the beautiful area of Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca and seeing their happiness and pride in what they have done. I know the member can comment on the pride that is felt because he represents the base.

**Mr. Keith Martin:** Mr. Speaker, there is no question of the pride and the professionalism of the men and women in our military. It is fair to say that the members of our armed forces and their families have given more to Canada than what Canada has given to them, or more specifically, what the government has given to them. That is why we are here today debating the motion put forward by the Progressive Conservative Party. We strongly support the motion, the essence and material of which we have been fighting for since we got here in 1993.

My hon. friend from the government correctly mentioned that I am at most of the events in my riding, including when ships arrive or leave. The message that is continually made time and time again is, "Give us the tools to do the job we are being asked to do". For a long time the Prime Minister has been making foreign policy obligations without funding our forces to do the job.

We need a combined foreign affairs and defence white paper, done in unison along the lines of what the Australians did. To do a foreign policy white paper and a defence white paper in isolation would be utterly absurd. They have to be done in lockstep so that our military has the tools, finances and the personnel to do the job they are asked to do based upon our foreign policy dictates.

I would ask the hon. government member to tell that to his foreign affairs minister, and more important, the Prime Minister. The government has to get with the program and fund the shortfall beyond what the military needs today, which is \$1.5 billion to \$2 billion every year for the next five years. That will enable members of the forces to do the jobs they are being asked to do, and will enable them to be secure in those dangerous tasks abroad.

● (1705)

**Mr. Larry Spencer (Regina—Lumsden—Lake Centre, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, very recently I talked to Captain Truelove of the HMCS *Regina*, which I believe is now docked in Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca preparing to leave for the gulf area very shortly. I said to him, "I understand from the Liberal government that your naval operations are very well funded". He immediately let me know that he had a lot to say about that, and that it was not true.

The Liberal government continually criticizes the Alliance for promoting cooperation with the United States and for seeking greater and stronger funding for the military, yet it talks about us, in reference to the U.S., weakening our sovereignty. Sovereignty requires a certain ability to guard and protect one's own borders.

Does the member think that a strong military will support, strengthen or weaken our own sovereignty? Is it important to sovereignty?

**Mr. Keith Martin:** Mr. Speaker, obviously having a strong defence force is absolutely congruent and essential for maintaining our sovereignty. The three areas, the navy, the army and the air force have to have the funds to do the job. In fact, *Jane's Defence Weekly*, the Auditor General, the Senate report, the Canadian Alliance, virtually all opposition parties and even the government's own defence minister as well as the chair of the defence committee on the government side have said that we need to fund our military urgently and acutely. If we do that, we will secure our sovereignty in a better way. If we do not, our sovereignty will be deeply compromised, as it is today.

**Mr. John O'Reilly (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I want to take this opportunity to thank the member for Saint John who brought forward this motion. I am sorry that the opposition cannot get together and support a motion for which every one of us could vote. It sounds like it is one word from "condemn" to "encourage", but I guess we will have to live with that.

I welcome the opportunity to discuss the Canadian Forces. As members of the House will know, the Minister of National Defence has worked over the last five months to foster a public dialogue on defence issues. He has been very frank about the challenges, including the financial challenges, facing our military.

These issues need to be part of the public discussion. They are too important to ignore. That is why I am pleased to take part in the debate.

At the same time, it is important that any discussion of the sustainability of the Canadian Forces also recognizes its many achievements, both in Canada and internationally. I have nothing but the highest respect for the Canadian Forces. I have seen it in action both at home and abroad. I have seen it in Kosovo with you, Mr. Speaker, in Bosnia and in Macedonia and have witnessed it tremendous dedication. Our men and women in uniform have shown commitment and determination in the face of many dangers and under very difficult circumstances. They deserve the respect of all Canadians.

### Supply

Right now a substantial number of Canadian personnel are serving in and around Afghanistan, as part of Operation Apollo. They have received glowing praises from their allies, including American military leaders, who recognize their professionalism, skills and their experience.

Recently the government decided not to rotate more ground troops in Afghanistan. In my opinion, the decision is a good one. It helps reduce the overstretching of the Canadian Forces and it gives some of our men and women in uniform a chance for a much deserved leave and to focus on essential training requirements.

Despite the departure of the Canadian battle group, Canada is still making a significant contribution to the campaign against terrorism. Our naval and air force personnel continue to play an important role in the campaign. The men and women who are serving on this mission have shown us that their resolve has not faltered. They remain committed to combating terrorism. If we think about our peacekeeping role, and sometimes it is peace making, we have a sizeable number of troops in Bosnia as part of Operation Palladium.

Last year I had the opportunity to visit the troops in the Balkans and I can state they are doing an excellent job. They are helping to create a safe environment so that people of Bosnia can return to their homes and begin rebuilding their lives.

As my hon. colleague has mentioned, the work of the Canadian Forces is not limited to international operations. On the domestic front, Canadian Forces have helped to ensure continental security, through Norad, and the expanded anti-terrorism unit, the JTF2, is helping Canada to meet its commitment to fighting terrorism at home and abroad.

The government has a strong commitment to the men and women who serve Canada. Putting people first has been a key phrase for defence and a great deal of progress has been made in this area in recent years.

I am proud to be a member of the Standing Committee on National Defence and Veterans Affairs and to have played a role in framing the committee's 1999 quality of life report. I am also pleased to see that the government has put most of the committee's recommendations into action. I salute the member for York Centre, the former minister of national defence, for having the strength of character to do that.

Other recommendations are in progress and some are in the process of being implemented. They include improved housing, health care and benefits. In fact more than \$100 million has been invested in upgrading military housing alone.

Defence has recognized the need to support members in the face of an increased number of deployments. As the minister noted, there have been many new initiatives to help members of the Canadian Forces and their families deal with stress related challenges.

Pay increases are another component of the department's effort to put people first. Just a few months ago, the government announced pay increases of 4% for non-commissioned members and 4.5% for general service officers, pilots, medical and dental staff. Quality of life will remain a key priority for defence, and rightly so. Our men and women in uniform deserve nothing less.

● (1710)

The motion before the House talks about military spending. As the minister said, increases in defence spending between fiscal years 2001-02 and 2006-07 will total more than \$5 billion. These increases include those in the December budget, which allocated \$7.7 billion across departments over five years to fight terrorism and reinforce public security.

Defence has made some key investments in sophisticated new equipment. A fine example is Canada's new search and rescue helicopter. The Cormorant is a powerful craft with long range capabilities and a large load carrying capacity. It will help make the Canadian Forces one of the most effective air search and rescue organizations in the world. Yes, I have flown in one. It is a very quiet and efficient vehicle which I found to be very state of the art. The people training on the Cormorants right now are highly efficient.

The LAV III light armoured vehicles and our Coyote reconnaissance vehicles are two further examples of impressive new equipment made in London, Ontario. The department is also upgrading existing equipment. The modernization program for the CF-18 aircraft involves 17 individual upgrades, including the installation of state of the art mission computers. This cost is approximately \$2.5 billion. Similarly, the incremental modernization project for the Aurora will replace its radar and the other on-board systems with the latest technology at a cost of approximately \$1.4 billion.

Finally, defence is also in the process of modifying two of its Airbus aircraft to be strategic air to air refuellers. Once this work is done, they will be able to deploy anywhere in the world to refuel our fighter aircraft. That is an impressive list of equipment purchase and upgrades. Obviously in the current security environment the focus will have to remain on modernization.

It is important to recognize that the future sustainability of the Canadian Forces depends not just on government funding but also on the structure of the forces themselves. It is important to provide strategic investments where they are most needed and at the same time identify areas within the existing structure where changes can be made to improve efficiency and free up resources. The motion before us today does not recognize this point.

The minister has made it clear that he is looking for efficiencies in the system. As the minister himself has acknowledged, he has been asking tough questions, such as whether certain capabilities are still required. The Department of National Defence had adopted modern resource management techniques. The government's goal is to ensure that Canadian taxpayers have good value for their money. Through the government's efforts, the Canadian Forces has remained multi-purpose, combat capable and able to meet the challenges of an increasing complex security environment. More money will be needed in the future. Of that there can be no doubt.



The motion before the House does not recognize the important steps that the government has taken to improve the quality of life for the Canadian Forces. It does not recognize the government's continuing efforts to modernize our military equipment so that Canadian Forces has the tools it needs to get the job done. It also does not recognize the importance of internal restructuring and the government's efforts to make the Canadian Forces sustainable in the future.

When I travelled with the military I had a great experience. I was a former cadet and a former member of the reserves, which gives me no expertise whatsoever in military affairs but it did provide me with a couple of boot camp experiences and some idea of what happens to the men and women of the forces. Both units that I trained with and operated at many years ago were in the reserve area, so they left our area quite a while ago.

I managed to deal with the awards banquet in Halifax recently for the search and rescue people. That involves many people right across Canada from all areas of search and rescue, not just the military. The winner was Irish and I presented an award to him. He has been with search and rescue through the military side of it for many years and has contributed greatly.

● (1715)

I think it was with great pride that the Ontario Provincial Police were there. The competition is returning to Ontario and next year it will be held in Kingston. Everyone here should take advantage of that. They put on visual displays and certainly show a different side of a branch of the military that we do not recognize.

The next weekend I was back in Halifax to watch the departure of the HMCS *Montreal* which has become our flagship in the Arabian Sea. Although families were upset to see their loved ones going away, there was a great pride that they were doing something to address terrorism and to make sure Canada played its part on the national scene. I saw the same pride two weekends later when I, on behalf of the minister, welcomed back the HMCS *Algonquin* to the port of Juan de Fuca on Thanksgiving Day. I must tell the House that it was a different atmosphere. As one sailor said to me "I am a sailor and when I am on the boat I want to get away from the docks so I can sail. And when my mission is finished I want to come back to the dock and spend time with my family".

Our reduction in our policy, not our government's policy, but certainly a recommendation of the military, was that we not rotate troops back into Afghanistan as a battle group. The reason for that could be argued over many vinyl tables and in many Legions. The fact of the matter is that they felt it was too long a stretch. When people are on their tenth rotation in places like Bosnia, when we look at the number of people who are being deployed on a regular basis to different places in the world on behalf of Canada and on behalf of peacekeeping and peacemaking, I think it was the right decision.

There was a battle group ready to go but, as some people know, they were disappointed not to be going. Not all the men and women were disappointed. Certainly some of them preferred to stay at home, but they are soldiers and they want to serve. They are air people and they want to fly. They are navy people and they want to sail. They joined the military to do that.

### *Supply*

It is that pride, that esprit de corps that exists. People will overlook some things but they will not overlook the major things. I encourage all parties to ask for more money. Do not walk by the Minister of Finance without bumping into him and telling him that the military needs more money. We did that with the previous minister and it worked three times. We will certainly do it as part of the defence committee and as part of my job as parliamentary secretary to make sure that the military gets the necessary money it needs to operate efficiently, effectively and to maintain that pride and that spirit.

When we look at the equipment that is being replaced, the government has certainly done a few things right. It purchased 15 search and rescue helicopters, as was mentioned earlier. They are now coming on stream and doing a very efficient job. Some of them are still experiencing the odd bit of technical difficulty which can happen with any new vehicle. I bought a new car once and had it towed into the garage three times the first week. I know what happens when the computers do not work or something minor happens. Now I only buy used cars.

The government purchased 651 high tech armoured personnel carriers. We have seen these personnel carriers in action and they are state of the art. They all have night vision equipment on them. They have the ability to go places where other vehicles cannot. They usually are six wheeled and not the old tracked type vehicles. They tend to run in difficult areas and can even survive certain landmines. In Bosnia one of them drove over a landmine and one wheel was blown off. Someone put up with a lot of loud noise and some damage to their eardrums but they were not killed. The vehicles are state of the art and they are not square. They have tapered sides so that glass is scattered in different ways. They do have a much more rapid deployment and more capabilities than the vehicles we used before.

● (1720)

We also have 203 state of the art Coyote armoured reconnaissance vehicles which can get places in a hurry. In fact when one of the American helicopters went down in Afghanistan the only vehicle that could get there to protect it from being raided was one of our vehicles. These are things we do not talk about, but we do have professional, well trained people with good equipment.

I received letters from Americans who served in Afghanistan thanking me for the professionalism of Canadians. The Americans indicated that they were not that well trained and that a lot of them were very new. They go into the American army, stay for a short period of time because they have to or want to, and then they go right out of it again. A lot of them are not very well trained and they recognize the professionalism of the Canadian military.

The new project improved the kit of the soldier. The state of the art uniforms that were issued have a different type of reflective material that causes a pattern disruption, are very hard to identify at night and certainly very hard to identify on radar so that they are less of a target than others. They have better communications systems. That particular program is very successful within the military.

### Supply

The modernization of the CF-18 is a huge undertaking. It changes the face of the CF-18s. It makes them superior to the American CF-18s. A lot of the American CF-18s, such as the Hornet aircraft, fly off aircraft carriers. Their wings fold up and that sort of thing. Ours are fixed wing, state of the art and very fast. Now that they have detection devices which are compatible with the Americans, they are superior to the Americans in most areas.

Not too much can be said about the Aurora maritime patrol aircraft. Once again it is an upgrade that makes it capable of flying farther and detecting better. It can operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week in protecting our coastlines, which are considerably lengthy.

The acquisition process was just signed to replace the 663 light utility vehicles, the small Jeep-type vehicles that have passed their time. They are 17 years old and were due to be replaced. The minister has made some moves that way and I think they have been the right moves. I want to reiterate that in the budgets of 1999, 2000 and 2001 there were significant increases in defence spending. I recognize that it is never enough, as everyone has said today, but we want to make sure, as a government and as members of Parliament, whether in opposition or on the government side, that we live up to the promises made to the over 3,000 men and women who are deployed abroad right now proudly fulfilling Canada's commitment to global peace and security.

Maybe in some of that discussion, we should take a hard look at our peacekeeping role, our peacemaking role and our going to war role. The Minister of National Defence is not afraid to ask questions. I think he may have opened a hornet's nest when he asked someone in discussing the cost of tanks why we needed tanks. There was a bit of a stir throughout the defence community because it caused people to ask questions. I think the minister will be asking a lot more questions.

He was pretty bold in his speech. I must say that his speech was well timed. The title was "A Time for Choices". We, as a government, are at a time for choices. People here who represent their constituents, particularly people who have bases in their areas, should think about those choices and make sure they work in the best interests of the Canadian Forces.

• (1725)

I do not want anyone to think that I am satisfied with the money in the budget for the Canadian Forces to perform its duty. I am not. I would like to see more.

**Mr. Roy Bailey (Souris—Moose Mountain, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I listened with interest to the parliamentary secretary and I have listened on and off all day to the various members.

Would the hon. member not concede that training is required today for the armed forces, particularly with what we expect in the way of long, drawn out terrorist attacks around the world? What are we doing to combat that type of warfare? I know it is very difficult but is there any special emphasis now on the Canadian armed forces to deal with terrorism as such?

**Mr. John O'Reilly:** Mr. Speaker, the emphasis in the last budget after the events of September 11, of course, caused all of us to look

at the expansion of the Office of Critical Infrastructure Protection and Emergency Preparedness and at HazMat training for firefighters.

I was formerly a firefighter. The member for Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke indicated that the college at Arnprior would be closing but that decision had not been made yet. However in the area of colleges and facilities that train for the defence of terrorism, for chemical warfare and for all the things we have on our mind now after the events in New York City and the continuing events, the budget has been expanded and is being looked at in all areas of defence.

In the area of transportation and industry, all ministers must look now at what defences we have to deal with terrorist attacks.

Joint planning with the Americans is going on as we talk about defending ourselves against bio-terrorism, bio-chemical attacks and the various problems that exist in fighting terrorists. We also have to, in that light, deal with the problems of the countries which have had their economies destroyed. We have to look at that rebuilding process also. We have to deal with systemic problems but we also have to deal with the safety of Canadians.

• (1730)

**Mr. Peter MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough, PC):** Mr. Speaker, I certainly agree with the concept behind what the parliamentary secretary is saying. There is a need to reinvest and to reinvigorate our military in terms of spending and in terms of priorities.

I have many constituents in Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough who take an active role in the military, either through the reserve or through the regular forces. Constable Howie Dunbar of the Westport policing force is a very active member of the reserve who just received the Governor General's Award for his commitment.

However the parliamentary secretary has to be intellectually honest about the amount of reinvestment that will be necessary. To do so, there has to be an acknowledgement that severe cuts were made; \$7 billion over a period of time, 23% of defence spending.

He talks about the future and how we should not walk by the Minister of National Defence or the Minister of Finance without reminding them of that, but is it whistling by the graveyard if he is not listening?

Let us be intellectually honest about the record of the government. It is fine to say that now the polls are telling us and now because of September 11 we will make that commitment, but the hon. member has to admit that his government made a decision to cancel the EH-101 program and yet made no decision replace it.

His future leader, the member for LaSalle—Énard, had this to say in *Hansard* on April 24, 1996:

On page 111 of the red book we called for the cancellation of the helicopter program. Done. We called for cuts to national defence. Done.

Severe damage to the armed forces. Done. That is what happened

Does the hon. member admit that now is the time to repair some of that damage and now is the time to be intellectually honest about what was done and get on with the job of rebuilding, reinforcing and helping to enhance our Canadian Forces?

**Mr. John O'Reilly:** Mr. Speaker, the member indicated I was not very honest with him and yet his greatest fear is that he will end up as the leader of the Conservative Party, because no one else wants it, and that he then will be wiped out by the next leader of the Liberal Party. I understand his fear of the member for LaSalle—Émard, and I do not blame him for it. However the member keeps moving back in time and keeps reflecting on his family politics. I wonder if he is being what he is accusing me of not being.

Let us talk about spending. The member wants to know about spending. Turkey spends \$7.7 billion, Greece spends less and we spend \$12 billion. This is the largest government budget of any department in Ottawa, at \$12 billion. It is a target for every other minister with a department that would love to have a budget that big. It is something we have to work at and increase. We have all agreed with that.

Although he will not admit it, when the member's party was around we had \$42 billion in deficit spending every year to deal with and the debt—

**Mr. Peter MacKay** And the \$38 billion left by the Trudeau government.

Maybe we could go back to the time of Sir John A. Macdonald when he borrowed money to build a railroad. If we want to talk about deficit spending, maybe it is Sir John A. Macdonald's fault. Let us keep going back. We can go back in history and say that Sir Robert Borden should not have borrowed money to fight a war. There is lots of history we could get here, but it seems that if we say "Trudeau, Trudeau, Trudeau" they all go rabid over there.

I am not sure if they are dealing with the same thing that I am trying to deal with, and that is to ensure increased spending on the military in the next budget. I have looked at the last three budgets on having an increase on military spending. I am pleased that we have recognized that. We recognized the men and women of the Canadian armed forces when the member for York Centre had the gumption and fortitude to bring in the quality of life report. Of the 84 items that were recommended, all of them are being acted on or have been brought in. There was a raise last week to the people of 4% and 4.5%.

The member does not want to recognize the fact that the government does good things. It is doing a lot of good things and I know it bothers the person who may think he wants to lead the fifth party. I guess if one is the last wagon in the wagon train, one would want to lead anything.

He should recognize that we are 7th in NATO in real dollars. He should recognize that Canada has a budget close to or larger than most other countries and that we require more pilots and are training them all the time. He does not want to recognize any of that. He only wants to deal with a leadership campaign that will go nowhere fast and that no one else wants. We can hardly wait to see it play out. Perhaps when it comes out, the way they are going, they will be able

### Supply

to rent a telephone booth and still be overcrowded for their convention.

• (1735)

**Mr. Loyola Hearn (St. John's West, PC):** Mr. Speaker, it is difficult to decide whether I should participate in the war effort or to let the gentlemen here settle it on the floor of the House of Commons. It is extremely interesting how today is revolving.

One of the things I want to address off the top is the misconception left in the House by the member for Nepean—Carleton. He mentioned that we were playing games with the motion put forward by my colleague from Saint John. The member for Saint John does not play games when it comes to our military. Every person in the military and every individual in the country knows very well where the member for Saint John stands in relation to our armed forces.

My party put forth a very strong motion today. It is actually not our motion. The motion is made up of the words uttered outside the House by none other than the minister responsible for our armed forces. I give him credit for having the courage to stand up in public and say what has to be said. Did he mean it? We saw evidence today that perhaps he did not when he was asked how strongly he felt about what he said and whether he had the courage to stand up for his utterances. He was asked if he had the honesty and the integrity to step aside if he did not get the money he needed or if he did not have the power, or the strength or the persuasiveness to get the money from his cabinet colleagues. He sulked away from responding to that question, which shows that perhaps he wants to remain in cabinet and is more concerned about a paycheque for himself than getting a paycheque for the military.

It is time that somebody over there stood up for the military. When we vote on the motion tomorrow, we will see who over there believes in doing something for our military. We will see if the minister responsible agrees with his own words because they are his words on which we are voting.

I now would like to get back to the remarks made by the member for Nepean—Carleton. He mentioned that the motion condemned the government. He said that it was a negative type of motion. Early this morning we were approached by the governing party and asked if we would consider softening the wording of the motion because many of those members wanted to support it for two reasons.

First, if they do not support this motion it will be very embarrassing for their own minister. Second, they want to support the motion because a lot of them are very honourable individuals who realize that the need of the military is great. They realize that we need to expend more resources to help our military, not just to maintain the status quo. We do not want to see our forces go through another exercise as they did in Afghanistan with all the embarrassments that came out of it.

I know that most people opposite like those of us on this side want to ensure that we support the minister when he says that more funding is needed. He did not say, as others in the past have said, that he could get along on what he already had. He said that more funding was needed and that the military was overstretched, I believe that was the word he used. More funding is all we are asking for, and we will see if the House agrees.

*Supply*

The member for Nepean—Carleton said that the word “condemn” was a harsh word, but if the motion were softer a number of those members would support it. We agreed to take out the word “condemn” and insert words such as “urge”, or “strongly urge” or “strongly recommend”, which somebody else suggested, and the member seemed pleased with it. We did not suggest to him what words to use. He suggested that words like these would be satisfactory.

• (1740)

He hustled back to his caucus room and undoubtedly talked to the House leader, from the reaction. I do not want to judge what happened. We waited and waited. I felt like I was a member of the military myself. I was waiting so long to get a response to a need. I still do not have an official answer. I got one indirectly from an NDP member, that the government would not go along not with our suggestion but with the suggestion that came from the member for Nepean—Carleton, who is a gentleman, who is extremely interested in the debate in the House today and who is a great chair of the committee, I am told. Consequently he realizes only too well that support is needed for the military.

It is quite clear. We are satisfied, and were satisfied, to eliminate the word “condemn”, if that is what the members want and if they do not want to stand and condemn their own government. We have no problem with that and we appreciate it. However it was inserted originally to stress how important the motion is in the House.

If they want, we will accept the change from condemn to something like strongly recommend or strongly urge. If that makes them feel happy, we will do it. What did they come back with? Was it wording to say that it would be okay as asked originally? No. They came back with an entirely different type of motion. They have come back with the type of question that the backbenchers would ask ministers every day. Why is the minister working so hard? Why has government been so generous? It is the same type of motion encouraging their government to keep on doing what it is doing. That is basically what it said.

We are not in the House to pat the back of the government. We would like to pat them somewhere a bit lower with a good boot. This is eventually what has to happen if we are to do something for the people in the country who need a proper government that considers all parts of the country, all groups in the country and in this particular case our military.

• (1745)

**Mr. John O'Reilly (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I listened with great interest and I am sure the member is suggesting that he will get the permission of his colleague from Saint John to amend the motion so that it is acceptable.

It is up to the opposition to amend the motion, not us. It is up to the mover of the motion to accept an amendment from her new House leader. If in fact that is the direction, then certainly we are all in favour of it. We do not have a problem with that at all. Until the mover of the motion agrees to an amendment from her party, then we have no choice but to deal with what is put in front of us.

**Mr. Loyola Hearn:** Mr. Speaker, we watch people trying to wriggle around or wiggle around situations and we have just seen it

here again. As with the motion that the Alliance has on the floor tomorrow evening in relation to the election of chairs, the Liberals are in a bind again this evening with this very motion.

The motion goes right to the heart of what is needed in the country as it relates to our military. It is backing up what the minister himself has said publicly is needed. There is one word the Liberals were concerned with: “condemn”. They had the opportunity to amend the motion. They asked us if they could amend the motion. We told them to go ahead and do it, and we offered words that were acceptable, words they suggested themselves. I know that most of the members would have gone along with it, but it was the hierarchy in the back rooms that said “No, we cannot agree to these words”.

It is not the words “strongly urge” or “strongly recommend” that they have concerns with. It is the rest of the motion that they have concerns with, which is made up of the very words right from the mouth of the minister. That is what they are concerned with. They are not ready or willing to support their own minister so we wonder what will happen to our poor people in the forces who are out there looking for assistance, which we see is perhaps not forthcoming. That is what we are concerned about.

• (1750)

**Mrs. Elsie Wayne (Saint John, PC):** Mr. Speaker, I want to say that the hon. member on the government side has been mentioned referring to my motion and that I had to agree to changes. I had already agreed to changes. I have been negotiating with the chairman of the defence committee, or he was negotiating with me. He said that the word “condemn” was the one. I could understand that in his position and the position of my colleagues on the government side, so I agreed to remove that. I agreed to remove the word “condemn” and put in “strongly encourage” the government. I agreed to all of that, but when I got a copy from the government side as to what it wanted, it had totally wiped out my motion altogether and it rewrote everything. What I did was just refer to what the hon. Minister of National Defence has stated publicly, as was stated by our House leader here today.

I would hope and trust that every member in the House of Commons on both sides of the House would agree to the amendment that I have agreed to put forward and that they would all vote in favour. All we are basically saying is, let us look after our military, let us put the money there for our military and let us do it now. If we were all to agree to that tomorrow, then everybody across this nation would look at both sides of the House in a positive way.

**Mr. Loyola Hearn:** Mr. Speaker, I am not sure if there was a question in there, but certainly from what the hon. member said let me make just one point. Let us ask not the people in the House but the people of the country: When it comes to concern or interest or honesty as it relates to the military, who do they trust? Is it the member for Saint John, who is ready and willing to put forth a motion that can be accepted by everybody, or a government that has slunk away from its responsibilities and is trying to protect a minister who went out and shot his mouth off when he had no right to do it?

*Supply*

**The Deputy Speaker:** Before resuming debate, I just want to take a moment to make a suggestion. Of late in our exchanges we have used various forms of the word “honest”. I have noticed it is beginning to cause some disorder. I would strongly urge members, or strongly recommend, which is another expression that has been used in a different context, to be very judicious, please.

**Mr. Gerald Keddy (South Shore, PC):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate your warning to the House on various phrases with and descriptions of the word honest. I am going to try to stay away from that. I almost was ready to go there, but I will stay away from that.

I have to tell the House that as I listened to the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence he forever reminded me of when I was a kid and we would hear the rooster crowing in the morning. I would say “That is quite a rooster” to my father. He would say “Yes, he sure is, but look at what he is standing on”. He was standing on the manure pile. I can tell the House right now that he reminded me forever of that rooster, all puffed up, his feathers just a-shining, the bright sunlight in the morning hitting on him as the king of the manure pile.

I would advise the parliamentary secretary to go out and seek the consensus of Canadians as to what they would like our military to do and what they would like our military to be.

In the little community of New Ross, Nova Scotia, where I grew up, there are a hundred and some names on the cenotaph. It is a small community of less than 2,000 people. Every year on November 11, we read those names. Those names did not get there by accident. They were put there because those Canadian soldiers from all the forces, men and women, paid the ultimate sacrifice so that we might have the privileges we have today. This is not a question of political dialogue. This is not a question of debate.

It is a fact that we sent our forces to Afghanistan and did not have transport planes to send them in. That is a fact. We had to hire American military transports to transport our soldiers and gear. They went there with camouflage that would enable them to fight in a forest surrounding. Maybe we should have realized that there were not many forests in Afghanistan. To add insult to injury, the Americans offered our Canadian soldiers American uniforms with desert camouflage. Our military—and I am not talking about our generals, I am talking about the parliamentary secretary, the minister, and the government—refused to order off the shelf, ready to wear uniforms from the Yanks because it thought it would be better to have them made in Canada, and if they came eight months later that was just too bad.

Come on: Where is our responsibility to our men and women in uniform? What is the responsibility of Canadian parliamentarians? It surely is not to debate this on a partisan basis.

Our troops arrived in Afghanistan without uniforms. There were no uniforms readily available or provided. Our troops arrived in Afghanistan without provisions and without water. We had to depend upon the Americans for water. We could not even supply our troops with drinking water. Their rations had to be boiled. They did not have water to boil them in.

Hundreds of years ago, military generals figured out that troops in the field operate on their stomachs. We can give them the best

ammunitions, the best munitions, better firepower, better rifles and good air cover, but they have to eat. They need water to drink. They need provisions. We sent our forces to a war zone. We did not send them on a picnic. We did not send them on manoeuvres with our NATO allies. We sent them to a war zone.

• (1755)

This is not about some type of an exercise held in Manitoba or New Brunswick. This is about the real thing. We sent our troops to Afghanistan and they were not prepared. We should be ashamed of ourselves. If there are any members of the House who are not ashamed, they should ask themselves the next question. The army performed excellently with the tools it was given but that does not take away the fact that it deserved to have better tools. This is not rocket science. Our troops need the best tools they can possibly have. They are in life and death situations.

On Saturday I attended the memorial service that added Private Ricky Green's name to the monument in the town of Chester. He was killed in action in Afghanistan. It was a tragedy for the Green family, for his fiancée, for his father and mother and for his uncles. It was a huge tragedy. That happens when people don the uniform of their country and go to war. We understand that. Our job as parliamentarians is to do everything in our power to make sure it does not happen or that it happens as little as possible.

We have a responsibility greater than our responsibility to partisan politics. This is not some debate about helicopters. We know we should have had helicopters. They were cancelled. Who cancelled them? The Liberal government cancelled them. We have taken a few of the EH-101s. The Cormorants have arrived. We had two arrive in Nova Scotia last week. The first ones that came were spirited away to British Columbia and up to Iqaluit because the government was embarrassed to see these new helicopters sitting on the tarmac anywhere else in the country.

This is no longer a question of whose fault it was. We need helicopters. It is going to take a minimum of three years from the date they are ordered to start taking delivery of them, so let us order them. The military has told us time and time again what they need. They have laid down their specifications on paper. The government has changed those specifications at least twice, and I think probably more than that.

They can crow all they want about what they have done for the military, but I can tell them that as a Canadian I have stood in front of the cenotaph in the little community I live in every November 11 for most of my adult life. As a matter of fact, when I was a Christmas tree grower we used to stop our crews at 11 in the morning on November 11 and take our moment of silence in the woods.

I do not need to listen to the shiny feathers standing on a manure pile. My grandfather was a veteran of World War I and World War II. He would be embarrassed if he were alive today. These men fought with distinction. My father and my uncles were in World War II. They fought for their country. They did not question it or try to make excuses for it. They recognized a need and they responded to it.

### Supply

It is our job as members of Parliament to recognize the need and respond to it and that means giving our men and women in uniform the tools they deserve to do the job, the tools to give them a chance to do the jobs we delegate them to do.

● (1800)

With the responsibilities we as members of Parliament give them, they need to have every chance and every opportunity to do the best job they can do. They cannot do that with secondary weaponry, secondary uniforms and secondary helicopters. They cannot begin to do the job we ask them to do.

[Translation]

**Mr. Antoine Dubé (Lévis-et-Chutes-de-la-Chaudière, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to make a few comments on the speech made by my colleague, who is right in many respects, when he says that much of the equipment is obsolete.

The motion moved by the Progressive Conservative Party asks that defence spending be increased, but we in the Bloc Québécois believe that it does not say clearly enough where and in what areas the budget needs strengthening. For this reason, we would have preferred that some sort of a plan of action be established, or specific directions.

For example, there have been changes at NATO. New countries have joined. And increasingly, groups within the European Council have spoken about asking contributing countries to specialize in one sector or another. This means that the situation has also changed. We are talking part in more peacekeeping missions.

I will close with this question. Would my colleague agree to have a debate, in committee or here in the House, on the direction of defence policy, a new defence policy adjusted to today's reality, rather than leaving it up to the current Minister of National Defence? As far as I am concerned, I do not have much faith in his judgment to determine the needs when it comes to matters of defence.

The member for Saint John, like me, believes that we should replace some of the equipment for transporting troops, for peacekeeping missions, for example, particularly the ships. Right now, the situation is disgraceful; that is a fact. Our troops are being transported by the Americans, or by private companies that at one point did not deliver the needed equipment because of payment problems.

Once again, I ask the member this question: would he agree to hold a debate on Canada's new defence policy, adjusted to today's reality, one that would have more support than if it were simply left to the judgment of the current Minister of National Defence?

● (1805)

[English]

**Mr. Gerald Keddy:** Mr. Speaker, the quick answer is yes. The long answer is that there should be a thorough and informed debate. The defence committee should hear from witnesses across the country. Members of the military should appear. We should hear from experts on what is going on in the European Union, on NATO and on terrorism. It is not the same world that we used to live in. It is totally different. There are totally different responsibilities and totally different challenges.

The whole issue of the threat of terrorism is one we cannot begin to comprehend or know how to deal with. It has to be dealt with differently from what the military has done in the past. The issue of NATO and its responsibilities raises another group of questions. What is Canada's responsibility to the world? What is Canada's role in the short term on this planet, in the next five or 10 years? In the long term what is our responsibility?

While we are discussing those issues, we should also remember an important fact. When we look at the role played by our peacekeepers in the last 30 years and certainly since Korea, there were not just a few peacekeepers who have been killed in action. Hundreds of peacekeepers have been killed in action. We do not look at peacekeepers as being in a war zone, but they are. We have never accepted the responsibility for what we have put our peacekeepers under. We do not recognize the sacrifices they make.

We need to take another look at our defence policy. We need to analyze it, to commit real dollars to it and to understand where we are headed in the future.

What is the role of the military in domestic defence? Is there a role? Is there a role for the military when there is a flood in the Saguenay or in Winnipeg or when there is an ice storm? Sure, there is a role. Does our military do more than go to war and work as peacekeepers? Absolutely, the military does more than that.

We have to recognize the different challenges that our military faces in the 21st century. It is no longer the 20th century.

**Mrs. Elsie Wayne (Saint John, PC):** Mr. Speaker, I want to say to my hon. colleague that I think our friend and hon. colleague from the Bloc was referring to whether or not we should have our motion passed as it is today, or whether we should have a motion that calls for another white paper study.

What I am saying is, as the hon. member stated, yes, we have to look at another study. There is no question about that, but it would take about two years before it was completed. The committee would travel all across the nation before it brought in its report. In the meantime, as we all know and I am sure my hon. colleague from Nova Scotia knows, there has to be money put into the military right away. When the other study is finished it will call for more money once again.

Does my hon. colleague not agree with that? I am praying that the Bloc members will support us.

● (1810)

**Mr. Gerald Keddy:** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the comment by the member for Saint John.

Certainly, there is a dual issue here. I was answering the question from the Bloc member with the understanding that we need to study, research and plan some type of long term strategy for our military. I absolutely believe we have to do that. In the meantime, do we need to give our men and women in the military the basic tools to do the job we have asked them to do? Absolutely. Without question, there is a short term demand and a long term strategy.

[*Translation*]

**The Deputy Speaker:** Resuming debate. The hon. member for Portneuf. I wish to inform the hon. member that he has only three or four minutes left, because I must adjourn at 6:15 p.m.

**Mr. Claude Duplain (Portneuf, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we will use whatever time we have left. Today, we have heard all sorts of things, and sometimes some unwarranted assertions.

I would just like to state a few facts. I believe that the government has supported National Defence very well in the past few years. Let me give an example or two.

In terms of funding, in recent years, additional funds were earmarked for the Department of National Defence and the Canadian Forces. We are talking about \$3.9 billion in additional funding included in the budgets for 1999-2000 and more than \$1.2 billion in the last budget. This means that, for the period from 2001-02 to 2006-07, the government will have increased the defence budget by \$5.1 billion. This is undeniably a significant investment.

And regarding the quality of life, we are aware that an army is only as strong as the morale of its troops. This is why the government has taken numerous initiatives to improve the conditions of service in the Canadian Forces and ensure a better quality of life for our servicemen and women and their families.

Canadian Forces members have been awarded pay increases and action has been taken on their housing problems. In addition, the government has introduced special benefits, particularly enhanced maternity and parental benefits.

Amendments to the Pension Act have provided immediate assistance to some 1,200 members of the Canadian Forces with permanent disabilities connected to their military service.

As well, the Canadian Forces have also made it possible for deployed personnel to maintain contact with their families by e-mail. Employment assistance programs have been set up for spouses, whose careers often suffer from frequent transfers. A post living differential allowance was instituted for military personnel transferred to certain areas of Canada where the cost of living is higher. As well, family resource centres have been set up across the country for military families.

### *Supply*

A major initiative is under way to improve health care for members of the Canadian Forces. It focuses on a broad range of standard health services, environmental medicine and industrial medicine, and health promotion both in Canada and elsewhere.

Now regarding modernization, the government is committed to maintaining multi-purpose, combat-capable forces that can perform the complex and varied tasks expected of them, be it to ensure the safety of Canadians, to protect the North American continent, or to promote international peace and security.

In recent years, the government has shown its commitment by taking a series of initiatives to modernize the Canadian Forces. Thanks to these initiatives, the Canadian Forces are now better equipped than ten years ago.

The navy is in the process of replacing three of its Oberon class submarines from the 1960s with four Victoria class submarines, which will be capable of performing more complex operations than the Oberon class ones, while requiring smaller crews and less maintenance. The new subs will significantly increase the capabilities of the Canadian navy.

With respect to the army, efforts focussed mainly on equipment that is more mobile and easier to deploy, such as the Coyote reconnaissance vehicle, which is fast and easy to drive, and the LAV III armoured personnel carrier—

● (1815)

**The Deputy Speaker:** I am sorry to interrupt the hon. member but the time is up. It being 6:15 p.m., pursuant to order made earlier today, every question necessary to dispose of the business of supply is deemed to have been put, and the recorded division is deemed to have been demanded and deferred until Tuesday, November 5, 2002, at 3:00 p.m.

[*English*]

It being 6:15 p.m., the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 6:15 p.m.)





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