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OFFICIAL REPORT  
(HANSARD)

**Tuesday, October 7, 2003**

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**Speaker: The Honourable Peter Milliken**

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# HOUSE OF COMMONS

Tuesday, October 7, 2003

The House met at 10 a.m.

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*Prayers*

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• (1005)

[English]

## PRIVILEGE

### ORAL QUESTION PERIOD—SPEAKER'S RULING

**The Speaker:** On Wednesday, September 24, the hon. member for Yorkton—Melville rose on a question of privilege arising out of the previous day's question period, charging that the Solicitor General had misled the House, thus impeding his ability to function as a member of Parliament.

I would like to thank the hon. member for Yorkton—Melville for having raised a matter of considerable importance. That he was not deterred by the financial complexities of the question is to his credit. That he was driven to raise a question of privilege in the House in order to obtain the kind of information that should be readily available to all members of Parliament is most unfortunate.

In his presentation the hon. member referred to the supplementary estimates (A) tabled in the House on September 23, pointing out that on pages 13 and 88 for Vote 7a it is stated, "Canadian Firearms Program New Appropriation \$10,000,000", and "Canadian Firearms Centre—Operating expenditures...to provide a further amount of \$10,000,000".

The hon. member then proceeded to contrast the wording used in the supplementary estimates documents with the Solicitor General's response to a question during question period in which the hon. minister had stated that the government was not asking for any new money for the firearms registry and that the money had been previously approved by Parliament.

The hon. member for Yorkton—Melville noted that if the Solicitor General was right, then the supplementary estimates were wrong, and Parliament would be voting for the same money twice. He maintained that this could not possibly be the case.

Describing the history of the House's actions concerning the estimates of the Canadian firearms program, the hon. member pointed out that Vote 7a was not a one dollar item, the usual means of transferring funds from one program to another in the estimates, but was listed as a new appropriation. He further stated that the House had been assured that the \$113.1 million approved in the main

estimates for 2003-04 was the entire budget for the program. He argued that the Solicitor General's claim that this was not new money defied common sense.

In conclusion, the hon. member said that an attempt "to fool members" into believing that the ten million dollars in Vote 7a were not new funds and thus somehow not subject to scrutiny or reduction was an affront to the dignity of the House and disrespectful of its role as "the grand inquest of the nation". The House needs accurate and truthful information to perform its functions and, therefore, the making of misleading statements in the House must be treated as contempt. In the opinion of the hon. member for Yorkton—Melville, the Solicitor General clearly misled the House and he stated that he was prepared to move the appropriate motion should the Speaker rule that the matter is a *prima facie* case of privilege.

[Translation]

The hon. government House leader addressed the matter on behalf of the Solicitor General describing for the House the use of one dollar items in the estimates, indicating that the Solicitor General had not misled the House and promising to return to the House with additional information.

[English]

The hon. member for Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough and the hon. member for St. Albert also contributed to the discussion of one dollar items and what constitutes a new appropriation.

On September 25, the government House leader provided additional information concerning the nature of the request for \$10 million. He pointed out that operating budget carry forwards are an accepted part of government financial management practices. He stated that the supplementary estimates for the last fiscal year 2002-03 contained requests for the approval of a total of \$629 million in carry forward funding for 87 departments and agencies. The government House leader also underlined the fact that the \$10 million in question is money that had been previously approved by Parliament, to which point I will return.

It is understandable that the hon. member for Yorkton—Melville finds the presentation of this item in the supplementary estimates (A) somewhat confusing. The funds in question are certainly presented in the document as a new appropriation.

*Speaker's Ruling*

As hon. members know, Parliament provides the government with funds by giving it the authority to withdraw specific amounts of money from the consolidated revenue fund for specified purposes. In granting funds to the government, Parliament sets an upper limit on the amount that may be spent on a program or activity. The government may not exceed that limit without seeking additional funds from Parliament, which is done by way of supplementary estimates.

[Translation]

In the supplementary estimates (A) 2003-04, under Solicitor General, Vote 7a, Canadian Firearms Centre—Operating Expenditures (page 88) there is a request to Parliament for two amounts: a transfer of \$84,840,694 and a “new appropriation” of \$10,000,000.

• (1010)

[English]

With respect to the amount of the transfer, the supplementary estimates explain that the government is requesting Parliament:

To authorize the transfer of \$84,840,694 from Justice Vote 1, Appropriation Act, No. 2, 2003-2004 for the purposes of this Vote....

[Translation]

This is a transfer of funds already approved by the House on June 12, 2003, as part of the current fiscal year's main estimates.

[English]

Under Explanation of Requirement, the new appropriation of \$10 million is described as “Operating budget carry forward.” A note explains this item as follows:

This amount represents the operating budget carry forward for Justice for the Canadian Firearms Centre.

A further note states:

Effective April 14, 2003, Orders-in-Council P.C. 2003-555 and 2003-556 established the Canadian Firearms Centre as a separate department and transferred from the Minister of Justice to the Solicitor General of Canada the control and supervision of the Canadian Firearms Centre.

It is important at this point that hon. members clearly understand what is meant by an operating budget carry forward. The main features of a carry forward can be identified as: first, carry forward is from one fiscal year to the next; second, carry forward of an operating budget is limited to 5% of that operating budget in the main estimates for the original fiscal year; and carry forwards are done individually by program and not for the main estimates Vote 1 (operating expenditures) overall.

Before proceeding further, it may also be useful to make clear the distinction between carry forwards and dollar items, since the matter of dollar items was raised during the initial discussion of this question of privilege. *House of Commons Procedure and Practice* at page 733 describes dollar items as follows:

Supplementary Estimates often include what are known as “one dollar items”, which seek an alteration in the existing allocation of funds as authorized in the Main Estimates. The purpose of a dollar item is not to seek new or additional money, but rather to spend money already authorized for a different purpose.

Dollar items deal with the transfer between votes of funds approved during the current fiscal year. A transfer of this kind permits the funds to be used for a purpose other than that for which they were originally approved. Dollar items cannot be used for a

transfer from one government department to another. Hon. members will note that in the transfer of funds mentioned earlier, from the justice department to the Solicitor General, the specific amount of the transfer is indicated rather than a nominal one dollar figure.

Carry forwards, on the other hand, deal with the transfer of funds from one fiscal year to the next. The money to be carried forward was money approved by Parliament in the original fiscal year, but not spent in that year. Since the approval of the funds lapses at the end of the original fiscal year, Parliament must authorize the carry forward in order to reapprove the spending authority. There is no change in the purpose for which the funds are requested.

As carry forwards are done on a program basis, the Justice operating budget carry forward is properly listed under Solicitor General. As I mentioned earlier, the program, Canadian Firearms Centre, was transferred on April 14, 2003. Therefore, it would no longer be permissible to have the carry forward listed under Justice, because the justice minister no longer has authority for the program.

The situation before the House can be summarized as follows. In the preceding fiscal year, 2002-03, the government sought and received spending authority to finance the Canadian Firearms Centre. Over the course of that fiscal year, it apparently made use of only a part of the funds that Parliament had granted for that purpose. The unused funds lapsed at the end of the fiscal year. The money remains in the consolidated revenue fund, but the government now lacks the authority to spend it.

[Translation]

Through the supplementary estimates (A), 2003-04, the government is seeking new authority to spend a part of the previous fiscal year's allocation, which it did not use during that year.

[English]

In a manner of speaking, therefore, the House is indeed being asked to vote on the same thing twice. Authority was sought and granted to spend the \$10 million on the firearms centre during fiscal year 2002-03. However, the money was not spent and that authority has lapsed.

The government is now seeking fresh authorization to spend that sum on the firearms centre during fiscal year 2003-04. The decision as to whether that authority should be granted is obviously one that the House itself must make. As with any request in the estimates, the House has the right to reduce the amount requested or to refuse it entirely.

In light of these facts, I cannot agree that the remarks of the hon. Solicitor General are misleading. As is true of any large and diverse organization, the Government of Canada makes use of many technical accounting devices that may be unfamiliar to those of us who are not specialists in the field of public finance. However, the fact that the \$10 million is a carry forward is set out in the supplementary estimates (A), while the wording is not as clear as it might be. While it is true that this represents a new appropriation in the current fiscal year, there is no evidence to suggest that the hon. Solicitor General is incorrect when he asserts that it does not represent over the two fiscal years any increase in the overall funding for this program.

It should be noted that the actual amount of funds which have lapsed will only be known when the Public Accounts are tabled. It is only then that members will be able to determine if the carry forward respects Treasury Board guidelines. This ruling should not be taken as passing judgment on the availability of the \$10 million amount in the carry forward. I am sure the hon. member for Yorkton—Melville will follow the Public Accounts with great care on this point.

I wish to thank all hon. members for their patience in dealing with this matter, which has touched on some relatively technical explanations of the workings of our financial procedures. The issue underscores the need for Parliament to be presented with clear and complete information in order to fulfill its responsibilities. And once again, I wish to commend the hon. member for Yorkton—Melville for raising this important question, and I trust that the matter has been clarified to everyone's satisfaction.

● (1015)

PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION REPORT—SPEAKER'S RULING

**The Speaker:** Order. I hate to bore hon. members with these technical details but I have two rulings to give and I might as well get the other one done now as opposed to later, especially since the hon. member for Fraser Valley is here. I would like to rule on the question of privilege raised by him on September 29, concerning the manner in which the Public Service Commission informed members of the House about the results of its inquiry into the hiring and promotion practices in the Office of the Privacy Commissioner.

I would like to thank the hon. member for Fraser Valley for raising this matter, which is of concern to all hon. members.

In drawing the actions of the Public Service Commission to the attention of the House, the hon. member for Fraser Valley made two points. First, he argued that the report of the Public Service Commission ought to have been tabled in the House prior to being made available to the general public. Second, he claimed that the commission had shown disrespect for members by scheduling a media lock-up prior to the briefing that was provided to members of the House.

The hon. member noted that the Public Service Employment Act, R.S., c. P-33, section 47(2), requires the Public Service Commission to table an annual report in the House. He contended that this requirement should extend to all commission reports, especially those dealing with officers of Parliament. He pointed to a ruling made on March 19, 2001, in which the Speaker had clearly indicated that with respect to material to be presented to Parliament, providing information to members should take precedence over any other briefings.

Finally, in a further submission made on September 30, the hon. member for Fraser Valley indicated that the Public Service Commission had expressed its intention to report to Parliament, in the terms of reference for its inquiry. The commission's report acknowledged that its investigations had been carried out in response to a request from the Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates. The hon. member argued that this supported his earlier claim that the report should have been laid before Parliament before being released to the public.

*Speaker's Ruling*

I know that there is a great deal of interest in all aspects of this matter, both among hon. members and among the Canadian public at large. It is important, therefore, that we set out the details of these events clearly so that there is no risk of misunderstanding.

[*Translation*]

Standing Order 30(3) establishes the period for the daily tabling of documents during Routine Proceedings. Standing Order 32(1) makes additional provisions for tabling, and enumerates three conditions under which documents must be tabled. It states:

Any return, report or other paper required to be laid before the House in accordance with any Act of Parliament or in pursuance of any resolution or Standing Order of this House may be deposited with the Clerk on any sitting day or, when the House stands adjourned, on the Wednesday following the fifteenth day of the month.

● (1020)

[*English*]

I must therefore first ask if there is any statutory requirement for the tabling of a document of this nature by the Public Service Commission.

The Public Service Employment Act makes provision for two reports to be submitted to Parliament each year. Section 47 of the act, cited by the member for Fraser Valley in raising the matter, requires the commission to provide its annual report to the appropriate minister who shall cause it to be laid before Parliament within 15 days after receipt by the minister thereof.

Section 47.1 states:

The Head of the Public Service shall submit a report on the state of the Public Service in each fiscal year to the Prime Minister, and the Prime Minister shall cause a copy of the report to be laid before each House of Parliament on any of the first fifteen days on which that House is sitting after the Prime Minister receives it.

The members will note that these provisions apply only to the commission's annual reports.

There are also specific statutory provisions governing inquiries by the Public Service Commission and the presentation of the commission's reports. The Public Service Employment Act, R.S.C., s. 7.1 accords the following authority to the Public Service Commission:

The Commission may conduct investigations and audits on any matter within its jurisdiction.

It is under this authority that the audit in this particular instance was undertaken. There is no requirement in the act that reports prepared pursuant to section 7.1 be tabled in the House.

On the question of the requirement to table a document pursuant to an order of the House or to a standing order, an examination of our *Journals* shows that there has been no order made by the House that the report of the Public Service Commission be tabled nor is there any permanent requirement in the standing orders for such a report to be tabled.

Given the absence of a statutory requirement or a House order of any kind there are no procedural grounds on which the Speaker can insist on the tabling of the report.

*Routine Proceedings*

However with respect to the second point raised by the hon. member for Fraser Valley, that the media was briefed before members, I would draw two facts to the attention of the House. First, I would like to remind hon. members that my ruling of March 19, 2001, to which the hon. member for Fraser Valley referred, dealt with a bill that had been placed on notice but had not yet been introduced. What the Chair had to consider in that case were the rights of the House with respect to information concerning an item to come before it. At that time, I stated, and I quote from the *Debates* of March 19, 2001, at page 1840:

The convention of the confidentiality of bills on notice is necessary, not only so that members themselves may be well-informed, but also because of the pre-eminent role which the House plays and must play in the legislative affairs of the nation.

I cannot see that any basis exists for a similar claim in the present case. The report of the Public Service Commission has not come before this House nor is there any requirement that it do so.

Under these circumstances, there is no procedural requirement either for confidentiality or for precedence being accorded to hon. members.

The hon. member for Fraser Valley also indicated to the House that the investigation carried out by the Public Service Commission was initiated, at least in part, by a request from the Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates. In a letter from the chair of the committee to the president of the Public Service Commission, printed as appendix 10 of the committee's fifth report, the wish is expressed that the committee be informed of the results of the PSC inquiry. Such a request should not be confused with a formal request from a committee for production of a document made pursuant to Standing Order 108(1)(a) or a request from the House itself.

I remind the House that members of the Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates were provided with copies of the report prior to its being made public and that the Public Service Commission provided a briefing to all members prior to the release of the report.

It is also clear that the information provided to the media was embargoed by the Public Service Commission until the report's release. The media were therefore not in a position to make use of the information they had received until after members of Parliament had obtained that same information. In this particular instance, whether or not the embargo was respected is certainly not a matter on which the Speaker can be asked to adjudicate.

In light of the facts I have set out, I can find no grounds for the finding of a prima facie breach of privilege concerning either of the two points raised so ably by the hon. member for Fraser Valley.

**ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS**

●(1025)

[English]

**COMMISSIONER OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT REPORT**

**The Speaker:** I have the honour to lay upon the table, pursuant to subsection 23(3) of the Auditor General Act, the report of the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development to the House of Commons for the year 2003.

[Translation]

This report is permanently referred to the Standing Committee on the Environment and Sustainable Development.

\* \* \*

[English]

**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 two petitions.

\* \* \*

**INTERPARLIAMENTARY DELEGATIONS**

**Mr. Clifford Lincoln (Lac-Saint-Louis, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to the standing orders I have the honour to present to the House, in both official languages, the report of the Canadian delegation of the Canada-Europe Parliamentary Association, OSCE, to the Organization for Security and Co-operation in European Parliamentary Assembly, OSCE PA, from its annual session in Rotterdam, The Netherlands, July 5-9, 2003.

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**COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE****CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION**

**Mr. Joe Fontana (London North Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the sixth report of Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration entitled, "A National Identity Card for Canada?".

I want to thank not only the committee members for working so hard thus far, but also members of the Canadian public who have voiced their opinions, which we encourage. Hopefully, this report will encourage more and more Canadians to be engaged in this very important public policy issue.

**HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT AND STATUS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES**

**Mrs. Bev Desjarlais (Churchill, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I move that the fourth report of the Standing Committee on Human Resources Development and Status of Persons with Disabilities, presented on Thursday, June 12, be concurred in.

I ask the government to concur with the motion. The committee on disabilities presented an excellent report. I recognize that it was done prior to the summer recess but I think it is extremely important for the government to address the issues in the report.

*Routine Proceedings*

The chair of the committee, as well as others, did an excellent job. The report is entitled "Building a Brighter Future for Urban Aboriginal Children". There is no question that throughout the nation the aboriginal population, both on and off reserve, has suffered severely under the actions or inactions of this government and past governments.

It is troublesome enough for the aboriginal population as a whole but people with disabilities suffer even more as a result of services not being available and as a result of the conditions of poverty within the first nation population.

The government has had a habit of doing a lot of talking on how it will improve things throughout the country on a number of different issues. We had at one time the royal commission on aboriginal peoples. The government has ignored its report for years and now we have another report and the government is not taking any action yet is willing to do something as horrendous as invoking time allocation, or the possibility of time allocation, on other reports or issues.

It is not acceptable that excellent reports and work is done to address the issues and the government ignores the reports. I want to draw attention to this report and the comments that have been made.

I will read a few of the excellent recommendations to remind the government that its has to make an effort to follow through on the recommendations of the report.

**Recommendation one states:**

Building on the present Urban Aboriginal Strategy, and recognizing the federal government's commitment to Aboriginal children, the Subcommittee recommends that:

1. the federal government should identify a government department to take responsibility for providing policy and organizational coordination among all federal departments with programs for Aboriginal people (both on and off reserve) in order to better collaborate with provincial/territorial governments and, where appropriate, municipalities;
2. Aboriginal organizations, both political and those representing Aboriginal service-providers, be invited to take a proactive participatory role in such an initiative; and
3. a key output of this initiative be the creation of an integrated federal policy and program framework for the development of young Aboriginal children, both on and off reserve, from the prenatal period to age twelve.

I will talk a bit about that recommendation and draw attention to the fact that the committee has recognized the need to identify one department to accept responsibility. I want to emphasize the importance of that.

What we have seen over the course of the last couple of decades is the government sort of working on a "let's divide and conquer" kind of approach to providing services and funding for first nation groups.

Therefore we separated health and put it under the Minister of Health and that will be the aboriginal and Inuit health centre. What we have seen happening is one minister looking after the health side so the others kind of say that they are not responsible for it, that it is under the other minister. What did we end up with? We ended up with the abuse of dollars in the first nations health branch by the deputy minister and the wasting of dollars that should have been there to support first nations health programs.

Then we have another department that will deal with some aspect of the funding through the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern

Development. From the perspective of the Metis people, we have another minister looking at that aspect of it. There is a breakdown with everyone saying that they are not responsible for one aspect.

● (1030)

Because of this, there has been a misuse of dollars, not by the aboriginal peoples but by the government departments. It is crucially important that one department accept responsibility for providing these programs so we can do a much better job of providing services for first nations people.

The report from the committee dealt specifically with the status of persons with disabilities. I am aware of a program that took place within my riding. It was done in conjunction with the province, the OASIS agency and the health branch. It was an excellent program. I personally knew numerous people who worked within this program. They already had started, among those groups, to provide a program to assist people within the first nations communities with disabilities which provided the extra supports for the family members and made them aware of what was available. The program was absolutely excellent.

What happened was it only had limited funding. They tried to get more funding but what did the governments do? It was a divide and conquer approach. The governments said that they were not really sure the program worked. We were in the communities, we knew the people and we saw the work they did with those families. The families said that it had been great to have someone there to help them. They said that it was hard when they had children who needed help 24 hours a day, seven days a week. It is tough enough in an urban centre like Ottawa to look after a child under those conditions, imagine what it is like when the nearest health facility is 100 kilometres away. Providing the additional respite for the parent is not right there. It makes the job that much tougher to do.

I saw the program operating at the ground level and it was a fantastic program. First nations people were involved with providing the assistance, which was being done in conjunction with the OASIS agency, the child and family services agency. What happened was there was no funding and no program.

When a report then comes out saying that we need to provide those services, it is just unconscionable. I saw the program in place and it worked great. However because of this government's funding approaches, it did not survive. It is time the government put its money where its mouth is instead of in the pockets of certain people. It needs to put in place programs and support so we can provide those programs.

**Recommendation two from the committee states:**

The Subcommittee recommends that all federal government departments with programs for urban Aboriginal families and children ensure that urban Aboriginal service-providers are consulted in program development, implementation and evaluation.

*Routine Proceedings*

Once again, it sounds great. The government has said time and time again on numerous issues that it would work along with aboriginal people and first nations people and that it would listen to them. Part of the consultation process and part of the listening process is following through with some of what is heard. It is not to say that they should go ahead and talk but the government will not do anything because it comes from the people and they really do not know. That is the way this government and governments before have approached their work with first nations people, aboriginal people, the Metis, the group as a whole, and it is not acceptable. There is a need to work with them and listen to what they have to say.

As I indicated previously, there was a program in my own riding that was working. It involved the service provider, the OASIS agency, and the people from those communities. They would say what was good and what did not work and they tried to sort out what was best in order to provide services to the people in the communities. Once again, there was a lot of talk but nothing happening.

Recommendation three states:

We recommend that steps be taken to build a pilot project around services for children in the Urban Aboriginal Strategy pilot projects.

1. Recognizing that pilot projects are community driven, we urge the Privy Council Office to engage representatives of children's services to preliminary meetings in cities where the pilot projects have not yet been defined. These would include, among others, Child and Family services, early childhood development services, and schools.

2. Acknowledging the difficulties confronted by many urban Aboriginal parents in moving between areas of federal and provincial jurisdiction, we further recommend that the evaluation of the Urban Aboriginal Strategy pilot projects include indicators of increased collaboration on jurisdiction and resourcing issues related to programming and funding for children with complex needs, such as children with disabilities and children with emotional and/or medical needs. We also recommend that evaluation of the pilot projects examine to what extent the funding results in concrete, meaningful outcomes for urban Aboriginal families.

● (1035)

3. The Subcommittee has heard about the importance of ensuring that collaborative projects remain community-based and work toward outcomes defined by communities. We would therefore urge the Privy Council Office to ensure that community partners in the Urban Aboriginal Strategy pilot projects play a key role in defining the strategy and outcomes upon which the pilot projects will be evaluated.

4. The Subcommittee urges the Privy Council Office to work with its federal government partners to adopt, at a national level, the collaborative practices between federal government departments which might emerge from the pilot projects.

Again I go back to the project in my riding. It had first nation providers involved in it. The bottom line was the government did not listen. Once again, this report has excellent recommendations. It is no surprise that the government has not concurred with the report. From what I have seen in action and the reality of it all is that it will not listen. It is only a bunch of talk.

Quite frankly, it is not acceptable that dollars are spent time and time again. Efforts are made by members in the House. I think we will all acknowledge that so often the government and the opposition parties in the House do not really work together. We do not always have unanimous reports that come from committees with excellent recommendations. The chair and the vice chair are from the governing side, and the government totally ignores what comes out of the recommendations.

When a report comes out of committee that is this good, it is extremely upsetting that it is ignored. It is not a surprise any more

but I think it is important that we keep this in the minds of Canadians that good work does come out Parliament and committees. The bottom line is none of it will ever succeed if the government does not follow through on the recommendations. All it becomes is a bunch of paper, a waste of taxpayer dollars and a very disheartening experience for those involved as well as for the people that it is intended to support.

Recommendation four states:

The Subcommittee reiterates the recommendation in the First Nations Child and Family Services Joint National Policy Review that the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (DIAND) funding formulas to First Nations Child and Family Services (FNCFS) agencies be reconsidered in order to recognize the importance of preventative services, alternative programs, and least disruptive/intrusive measures for children at risk. It is further recommended that the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development seek funding to support such programming as part of agency funding.

Once again we are dealing with the issue of what needs to happen. We need to identify a particular provider of the service and ensure that there is stable funding. The government is not willing to put that action in place.

It is crucial that first nations have the stabilized funding. It is disappointing that this happens, especially when it hits home to those most vulnerable. We have persons in poverty and with disabilities. Families are trying to keep their disabled children at home. What happens is the family is on edge at the end of the funding. That happened with the project with which I dealt.

People came to me and asked what they could do. They said that it was a great program. I tried to figure out why it was cancelled. I contacted various agencies. The bottom line was people said that the program did not work, yet it had not involved those people who were in the program. It totally ignored them. That is what happens when there is no stabilized funding.

Every time before a federal election, government members go to the people and tell them that they have a deal for them. They tell first nations people that they will ensure they get a certain amount of money. They tell them that there is Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, that they will follow through and make it work. They tell them that they will give first nations millions of dollars for that program, that school and that airport.

After the election, the government does not follow through on its commitments and we have first nations people in cities and in their communities on their reserves still living in the same conditions because the government has wasted dollar after dollar.



*Routine Proceedings*

•(1040)

It is very real. We have the disabled people in those communities, children who cannot leave their wheelchairs, cannot feed themselves and have to have care 24 hours a day, seven days a week and no programs in their communities to support them. Why? Because the government talks a lot but it does not follow through on committee reports such as this one which is an excellent committee report.

I ask the House and the government to put everything else aside right now and deal with an issue that is extremely important, one that will benefit some Canadians, that will make a difference in the lives of Canadians and that will ensure that we do the job we are supposed to do by providing services to people in the country.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Sébastien Gagnon (Lac-Saint-Jean—Saguenay, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, since she had a hand in preparing this report and also made very useful comments, I would like to ask my colleague a question following what she just said.

The community groups that participated in all these interviews expressed a major concern. They wondered how to directly allocate this money, which is meant to help these youth and children at risk. In light of what the witnesses who appeared before us said, my fear is whether or not the right people are getting the money to run the programs.

I recommended that the friendship groups, which seemed very convincing and concerned, work directly with the clientele rather than other groups that are somewhat more political in nature.

My recommendation is as follows: that the federal government give money to the groups so that they can redistribute it properly to the youth who are directly concerned.

Does my colleague echo this concern? In the past we have often seen the federal government spend and squander staggering amounts of money that did not go to the people it was meant for.

[*English*]

**Mrs. Bev Desjarlais:** Mr. Speaker, absolutely. There is no question a formula has to be in place where those agencies can direct the dollars.

I commented previously on a project in my riding. The funding for it had to go through the federal government, the provincial government and then the child and family services agency. The child and family services agency wanted to continue the program, but one partner said that it did not have money available, so the program was lost. There was no control over what the other two did. There was no process in place so the agency itself could control the dollars that were needed to provide the program.

I will be the first to admit that sometimes programs do not always work, but we need a place to deal with that. The program in my riding was absolutely fantastic. People who were receiving the assistance had good feelings when they could bring their child home from Winnipeg and provide the care they needed.

However they still need some supports in the community. They need some days off, some respite, and that is hard to get in first nations communities or for people living in poverty unless the

supports are in place. It definitely becomes an issue when the funding drops out suddenly. Those individuals are then left thinking that they will have to move from their communities because family support is no longer available.

The waste of dollars is another issue. I can go back to what happened with the first nations community in my riding in Manitoba where the deputy minister was a key factor. Government people were involved in the wastage of dollars, yet the first nations community took the brunt of that. There was an implication on the people that they had wasted the money, yet it was the government department that had messed up, and still has done nothing about it. It was made to seem like the first nations wasted the dollars, but in fact it was the government that blew away those dollars for health for first nations people who needed those services. That is why there has to be a different process in place.

•(1045)

**Mr. Joe Comartin (Windsor—St. Clair, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I want to commend my colleague for the excellent speech she gave and the passion that she showed on this issue.

I draw her attention and the attention of the House to an incident along the same lines that happened in Windsor. We had an agency that was funded by Health Canada for preschool children within the aboriginal community. The funding was arbitrarily cut in February or March of this past year. I had the same experience as my colleague from Churchill. In spite of all the representations I and other members of the community made on its behalf—because there were some allegations, not against this particular agency but against the parent agency of some mishandling of funds—the department used that as an excuse.

We had children in the program who were autistic or who suffered from some physical disabilities, all of whom required services that would prepare them for the school system. The program was arbitrarily cut. To this date, despite all those representations from other members of the community, that funding has not been replaced.

Could my colleague comment on whether or not this is an experience she has had elsewhere in the country?

**Mrs. Bev Desjarlais:** Mr. Speaker, there is no question. There has been a number of projects in place that have had funding cut in the last year or so. From my perspective within Manitoba, I was being somewhat cynical, because it looked like all these projects were being cut because first nations were not supporting the First Nations Governance Act introduced by the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development.

I was kind of getting that feeling about it. Then as other projects were cut, one could not help but recognize there would be another election coming up. The government needs to feel that it has some dollars to dole out again and as a result, people who need those services are suffering.

*Routine Proceedings*

Somehow the government thinks it is okay to cut funding to a group that is trying to assist an autistic child and his or her family, preparing the child so that the child would be able to have some kind of continuing education. It is just too bad. It is just part of the game. These groups will simply not have the funding until the government is ready to dole out a bit more money. It is not acceptable.

There must be a system in place of stabilized funding that is not at the discretion of members of the government who can simply ditch it because they want to use the money for something else. We need to have programs and projects in place.

The recommendations from the subcommittee on disabilities were excellent. I want to see the government put action into words, concur with the report, and not put it on a shelf somewhere, like the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples. We could probably make a highway from the dust that is sitting on that report because it has been packed down so much for so long. The government must change its approach and start following through.

● (1050)

**Mr. Myron Thompson (Wild Rose, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I wish to commend the member for bringing this matter to the attention of the House.

The member may be aware that I spent a year and a half, almost two years, travelling the country going from reserve to reserve. It was brought to my attention that some serious problems existed in terms of the serious needs that were not being met on a number of reserves. I found in my travels that the conditions were unbelievably and unexplainably horrible for a country such as Canada.

In an effort to revitalize some ideas brought forward to the government, there were a number of submissions made by grassroots people from reserves across the country. They were begging for help in regard to unemployment, severe addictions, opportunities for the undereducated and numerous other things.

I introduced a number of private members' bills in the House to improve their condition. Some members in the Liberal government decided to give some support. However, they all failed.

Can the member explain to me, why is it that there is so much reluctance on that side of the House to specifically say that there are definitely severe needs for the human beings who live on the reserves in our country? And why do we not get it fixed? Why is there such a reluctance to support these ideas that come from all walks of life?

**Mrs. Bev Desjarlais:** Mr. Speaker, far be it for me to sort out what is going on in the heads on the other side.

The only thing that I can honestly say would mean that the government would not follow through on recommendations that would assist in improving the conditions involving people within those communities.

The only thing that would hold the government back is control. We want to have an educated population that is able to provide for itself economically. We want a population that can stand up to the government and not have to be at the government's knees asking for funding so that individuals can put food on their tables and have schools in their communities.

The Government of Canada does not want to lose control over first nations people and that is unacceptable. The conditions will continue until the government gives first nations the real opportunities to improve conditions.

**Mr. Geoff Regan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise to debate this motion. I move:

That the House proceed to orders of the day.

[*Translation*]

**The Deputy Speaker:** Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

**The Deputy Speaker:** All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

**Some hon. members:** Yea.

**The Deputy Speaker:** All those opposed will please say nay.

**Some hon. members:** Nay.

**The Deputy Speaker:** In my opinion the yeas have it.

*And more than five members having risen:*

**The Deputy Speaker:** Call in the members.

● (1140)

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

(*Division No. 236*)

## YEAS

## Members

Adams	Alcock
Allard	Assad
Assadourian	Augustine
Bagnell	Bakopanos
Barnes (London West)	Barrette
Bélangier	Bellemare
Bennett	Bertrand
Bevilacqua	Binet
Blondin-Andrew	Bonin
Bonwick	Boudria
Bradshaw	Brown
Byrne	Caccia
Calder	Cannis
Caplan	Castonguay
Catterall	Cauchon
Chamberlain	Chrétien
Coderre	Collenette
Comuzzi	Copps
Cullen	Cuzner
DeVillers	Dhaliwal
Dion	Discepola
Dromisky	Drouin
Duplain	Easter
Eggleton	Eyking
Folco	Fontana
Frulla	Fry
Godfrey	Goodale
Graham	Grose
Harvard	Harvey
Hubbard	Jackson
Jennings	Jobin
Jordan	Karetak-Lindell
Kilgour (Edmonton Southeast)	Knutson

*Government Orders*

PAIRED

Nil

**The Deputy Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.**GOVERNMENT ORDERS***[Translation]***PUBLIC SAFETY ACT 2002**

BILL C-17—TIME ALLOCATION MOTION

**Hon. Don Boudria (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.)** moved:

That in relation to Bill C-17, an act to amend certain Acts of Canada, and to enact measures for implementing the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention, not more than one further sitting day shall be allotted to the consideration of the third reading stage of the bill and, fifteen minutes before the expiry of the time provided for government business on the allotted day of the third reading consideration of the said bill, any proceedings before the House shall be interrupted, if required for the purpose of the order, and in turn every question necessary for the disposal of the third reading stage of the bill shall be put forthwith and successively without further debate or amendment.

*[English]***The Deputy Speaker:** Pursuant to Standing Order 67(1) there will now be a 30 minute question period.**Mr. Chuck Strahl (Fraser Valley, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, this is one of those occasions where we need to address both the issue, Bill C-17, but also the issue of the democratic deficit.

It is interesting that the parallel universe the former finance minister is operating in is holding a special caucus meeting over on that side tonight to try to determine what we can do to make this place more democratic. Invoking time allocation and closure is hardly the way to increase democracy. For the record, this is the 83rd time the government has moved to stop debate in this place.

The former finance minister repeatedly says that we have to do something to change the way we address issues in the House of Commons, that we have to be more democratic and that the government should not bring down the hammer of closure whenever it wants to. The government has used it 83 times. Not once did the member for LaSalle—Émard ever vote against a single one of those motions. He has used the hammer that the government has as a majority to shut down the rights of the minority time and again.

We support Bill C-17 itself. We are not putting up more speakers. We are willing to go ahead with it. We think it should go ahead and we should move on with it. However, we cannot support the way the government tries to get its way. It seems to have one way, "It's my way or the highway". We either agree or the government uses the hammer.

This is the 83rd time it has brought in time allocation or closure and it has been supported ably by the member for LaSalle—Émard every single time that it comes up for a vote. He is now going to supposedly address the democratic deficit in his own parallel universe tonight at the caucus meeting.

Lastewka  
Lee  
Longfield  
Macklin  
Maloney  
Marcil  
Matthews  
McGuire  
McLellan  
Murphy  
Nault  
O'Reilly  
Pagtakhan  
Patry  
Peschisolido  
Phinney  
Pillitteri  
Proulx  
Reed (Halton)  
Robillard  
Saada  
Scherrer  
Sgro  
Simard  
St-Julien  
Stewart  
Telegdi  
Thibeault (Saint-Lambert)  
Torsney  
Vanclief  
Wappel  
Wilfert

LeBlanc  
Lincoln  
MacAulay  
Mahoney  
Manley  
Marleau  
McCallum  
McKay (Scarborough East)  
Mitchell  
Myers  
O'Brien (London—Fanshawe)  
Pacetti  
Paradis  
Peric  
Peterson  
Pickard (Chatham—Kent Essex)  
Pratt  
Redman  
Regan  
Rock  
Savoy  
Scott  
Shepherd  
St-Jacques  
St. Denis  
Szabo  
Thibault (West Nova)  
Tonks  
Valeri  
Volpe  
Whelan  
Wood— 130

**NAYS**

Members

Abbott  
Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands)  
Bailey  
Bigras  
Bourgeois  
Brisson  
Cadman  
Casson  
Dalphond-Guiral  
Day  
Duceppe  
Epp  
Forseth  
Gagnon (Champlain)  
Gagnon (Québec)  
Gauthier  
Godin  
Gouk  
Guimond  
Herron  
Hill (Prince George—Peace River)  
Jaffer  
Keddy (South Shore)  
Lalonde  
Lebel  
Lunn (Saanich—Gulf Islands)  
Marceau  
Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)  
Ménard  
Merrifield  
Nystrom  
Paquette  
Perron  
Proctor  
Reynolds  
Roy  
Schellenberger  
Skelton  
Sorenson  
St-Hilaire  
Stoffer  
Thompson (Wild Rose)  
Toews  
Wayne  
White (Langley—Abbotsford)  
Yelich— 91

Ablończy  
Bachand (Saint-Jean)  
Bergeron  
Blaikie  
Breitkreuz  
Burton  
Cardin  
Comartin  
Davies  
Desjarlais  
Duncan  
Fitzpatrick  
Fournier  
Gagnon (Lac-Saint-Jean—Saguenay)  
Gaudet  
Girard-Bujold  
Goldring  
Grey  
Hanger  
Hill (Macleod)  
Hinton  
Johnston  
Kenney (Calgary Southeast)  
Lanctôt  
Loubier  
Lunney (Nanaimo—Alberni)  
Mark  
Masse  
Meredith  
Mills (Red Deer)  
Obhrai  
Penson  
Picard (Drummond)  
Rajotte  
Rocheleau  
Sauvageau  
Schmidt  
Solberg  
Spencer  
Stinson  
Strahl  
Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest)  
Wasylcia-Leis  
White (North Vancouver)  
Williams

*Government Orders*

Would the minister agree that addressing the democratic deficit is not enhanced by a record setting pace of shutting down debate in the House of Commons on legitimate, controversial issues like the bill before us today?

• (1145)

**Hon. David Collenette (Minister of Transport, Lib.):** My colleague from the Alliance Party seems to be talking out of both sides of his mouth. On the one hand he said that his party is for Bill C-17 and “we should move on with it” and then he said that this motion, a legitimate motion in the standing orders, should not be used.

There is a time for decision in all parliamentary debate. We believe that the decision is now. In fact he seems to agree with that because we should move on with it.

Let me remind the House that this was a bill that came here originally as Bill C-42. Then Bill C-44 was hived off and then it became Bill C-55 and then Bill C-17. The bill has been before the House for a year in one form or another. It has been debated at second reading nine hours and 35 minutes, three hours and 15 minutes at report stage, three hours and 25 minutes at third reading. All told, there have been 38 hours and 15 minutes of debate. Also the committee studied it from November last year until May 2003.

It seems to me that we have had a lot of debate. I say to my friends in the Alliance that this is not a matter for procedural argument. We are dealing here with a crucial piece of legislation that flowed from the terrible attacks on September 11, 2001. We had Bill C-36 and then we had the bills which I just referred to, ultimately becoming Bill C-17.

It is absolutely crucial in the interest of national security and in dealing with the North American security environment, that this bill be passed. That is why the government House leader correctly in my view has brought forward the motion today.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Claude Bachand (Saint-Jean, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to remind the minister that the bill before us is a consequence of September 11. We know that a number of changes and adjustments have been made to Canadian security laws.

I remember the first days after the World Trade Center attacks. There seemed to be consensus in this House that we did not want terrorists to succeed in restricting our rights and freedoms, when all was said and done.

The position of the Bloc Québécois on Bill C-17 has always been based on the fact that it was necessary to preserve the freedoms of Quebecers and Canadians. A number of provisions in this bill worried us, in particular the military security zones, and it does appear that the government has decided to listen to us on that point. In any case, that does not appear in the bill.

However, for the items called “interim orders” and “cooperative sharing”, we have pointed out that the government has paid no attention to the witnesses that appeared before the legislative committee, which you presided over. Moreover, we think that the government is going against the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. For these reasons, it would have been wise to spend more time on

what the witnesses and the members of Parliament have had to say. That is why we object to this sort of gag order.

As we said before, this is the 83rd gag order. Not only does the government not listen to the witnesses, do only what it pleases and follow the wishes of the Prime Minister, but in addition, it attacks parliamentary democracy by limiting debate and telling us, “You have just so many hours left and then it is over”.

You can understand that for us this is very hard to accept. I ask the minister if he thinks this is the proper way to act?

I think that there has to be the right balance of security, privacy and democracy. I think the minister leans much too far toward security, by imposing a gag order and ignoring the witnesses. This bill deserves further discussion.

Is the minister not putting too much emphasis on security rather than on democracy and the freedom of expression of the members of the House of Commons?

• (1150)

**Hon. David Collenette:** Not at all, Mr. Speaker. In response to questions by the Canadian Alliance, I already explained that the Standing Orders allow debate to be ended once all the arguments have been heard.

I am extremely pleased to agree with the hon. member from the Bloc Québécois on the need to strike a balance between respecting the rights and freedoms of Canadians and ensuring security. I think that, after all our debates both in committee and the House, we have struck this balance.

As the hon. member stated, we accept the position of the Bloc and those of members on this side of the House regarding the military exclusion zones, and we made changes by withdrawing the clause on these zones. So we have responded to members' arguments.

With regard to the other issues, the government's position is that once all the arguments have been heard, it is time to make a decision. That is what we are going to do today. The majority of members in the House of Commons want a debate followed by a decision.

As I already stated, there have been almost 40 hours of debate in the House; the committee debated this issue for almost one year. In my opinion, this demonstrates our willingness to listen to the opposition's arguments, as well as those of our Liberal colleagues. Once all the debates are over, the House must decide; that is why the government House leader introduced this motion.

[*English*]

**Mr. John Herron (Fundy—Royal, PC):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to send a message to the hon. minister.

[*Translation*]

It is true that this bill has been under consideration for quite some time, since 2002. It was before us last Christmas. There was also the summer recess.

*Government Orders*

[English]

We have had opportunities. If we needed to put this bill through and extend debate on it, we could have done that as opposed to recessing a few weeks early for the summer months or before recessing a week early last Christmas.

Mr. Speaker, you are probably aware that there is more than just a little bit of a rumour afoot that prorogation may take place as well. If the government has a legitimate agenda and it wants to get this bill through in an appropriate timeline, it is a little hard for members to take that we have had sufficient time to debate the bill and now is the time to make a decision. If we wanted to do that, we could have done that a long time ago.

I commend the minister for at least trying to bring forth a response to September 11. However, if the bill was urgent in order to respond to September 11, it is a little difficult to square the debate of this being a priority when we have had ample time to truly make it a priority and pass the legislation much sooner than now. When closure has been brought in for the 84th time by the government, it really does make that point very difficult to take.

I would like to know whether the minister thinks that is a reasonable point to make.

**Hon. David Collenette:** Mr. Speaker, memories fade very quickly around here because right after the terrorist attacks there was unanimity in the House that we had to deal with our domestic security and we had to work with our American friends to improve border security and other security for the continent. That is why Bill C-36, despite some considerable debate and some initial flaws, was ultimately passed.

Then we required the second bill, as I mentioned. The fact that this is the third manifestation of that bill shows that we have been serious in trying to reflect the concerns of members of the House.

However it has been more than two years since the terrorist attacks and we are still saying that we need more time. At a certain point, if we are going to govern we must make a decision. The government will be proud to defend that decision to the electorate when we go to the electorate, perhaps early next year, because we believe this is in the interest of national security.

I should just say to my friends in the Bloc, who were arguing a few minutes ago, that we actually adopted two Bloc amendments: one that clarified our intention that the minister would be the one carrying out the requirements of the security measure wherever the minister considered it necessary to do so, and that is not a delegated provision; and a second amendment to make the definition of transportation security applicable to the proposed section 4.81, Transport Canada, as well as the proposed section 4.82, the Solicitor General.

In other words, we had this debate. The Bloc members came forward with a couple of amendments, and congratulations to them, because they made very good points. We were moved by their arguments and accepted their arguments. However the time for arguments is over. It is time now for action.

●(1155)

**Mrs. Bev Desjarlais (Churchill, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I will confine my comments specifically to the issue of the time allocation and the comments the minister has just made.

The fact is that the House is debating a bill that contains sections that are still extremely contentious. Some changes have been made but some issues, such as the one dealing with the civil liberties of Canadians, are really contentious. Many people of great stature have brought forth concerns over the civil liberties aspect of it and the risk it imposes on the rights of Canadians.

The minister made a comment that somehow 38 hours and 15 minutes was just a bit too much and that we should not have any more debate on something of such significance importance to Canadians. I want to read a quote to him from Stanley Knowles who was a member of Parliament for Winnipeg North Centre. This is from the *Debates* of December 10, 1968:

Debate is not a sin, a mistake, an error or something to be put up with in Parliament. Debate is the essence of Parliament.

The government has lost the essence of what was intended with Parliament by numerous time allocations, and it is not acceptable. There is a great democratic deficit here. People responding to the actions in the bill want more time. They want changes to be made and they want a chance to debate the bill in the House.

**Hon. David Collenette:** Mr. Speaker, I am glad my friend from Churchill brought forward the name of Stanley Knowles. I served in the House with Mr. Knowles for 10 years, between 1974 and 1984. I used to attend the House leaders meetings as parliamentary secretary to the House leader with Mr. Knowles in the Constitution debate.

I accept that quote from Mr. Knowles in 1968. However I can say that from those House leaders meetings it was Mr. Knowles representing Mr. Broadbent, the then leader of the New Democratic Party, who believed that after all the debate we had on the constitutional resolution, the patriation resolution, that it had to be brought to a head and that Parliament had to finish the debate.

That was a very acrimonious debate, as members may remember. One night members of the Conservative Party stormed the Chair and touched the mace. There was almost a riot in the House. That was because they felt so strongly about the issue that they had time to make their case. In fact, at that particular point in time the now member for Calgary Centre, who was leader of the opposition, used dilatory tactics in the House to force the government to put the reference before the Supreme Court. However when it came back changes had been made. I specifically remember the position of the NDP with Mr. Broadbent and Mr. Knowles, which was, "We have had the debate. Enough is enough. We will support you".

The member quotes one of the great parliamentarians of all time, Mr. Knowles, but even Stanley Knowles knew that at a certain period of time a government must, if it is to act responsibly, make a decision.

*Government Orders*

• (1200)

**Mr. Chuck Strahl (Fraser Valley, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned earlier, I believe the official opposition is acting responsibly in this. We do want the bill to move forward and we are doing our part in that by not putting up further speakers and not using delaying tactics, although there is always a balance between reasonable delaying tactics, discussion or debate by any opposition party, or maybe even some backbench Liberals, and the right of the government to bring forward legislation in a timely way. It is a balancing act and I recognize that.

However I would argue that it is not a question of whether we have enough time in the House to deal with what is a very important bill. It is a matter of whether the government manages the time in here properly in order to get through the business of the day. Just to use an example, we will be debating for the third time a bill to fuse the operations of the National Library of Canada and the National Archives of Canada because the government could not follow through on a promise made in committee to delete part of the bill. The minister comes back to the House and we squirrel away hours and hours of time, when it should have been done and was promised in committee to be dealt with expeditiously so we do not take up House time. Instead we are in here debating what should be a routine proceeding.

We have to cut off debate on important bills, like Bill C-17, instead of letting people speak it out. It is a big issue. Canadians are debating the appropriateness of the balance between the rights of the government and national security and the rights of private citizens to have the protection of the charter of rights. That debate should go on.

This party is satisfied and we are ready to move on but others are not so we should let them continue. The government should not be using the excuse that there is not enough time in the House to continue debate. If the government managed its affairs properly and fulfilled the promises it made in committee and elsewhere, we could go through some of those other bills quickly, leaving more time for important business, which is what should be happening here today, rather than shutting off debate. We probably only need an hour or two more of debate and we could get through this and move on.

I and my party are prepared to do that, but I am not prepared to tramp on the rights of the members of the Bloc Quebecois who want to speak a little longer. We should let them speak their minds and then we will move with it and support the government.

**Hon. David Collenette:** Mr. Speaker, the arguments by my friend in the Alliance are somewhat antediluvian in the sense that we have the opposition always arguing against any time allocation motions. In fact, in the old days, before the first world war, there was no way to cut off debate.

I believe it was on the naval bill in 1914 that the government of Sir Robert Borden introduced the first closure process. It was used a few other times, of course the most recognizable one being the pipeline debate in 1956 which was certainly mishandled. The government at the time paid the price in the next election.

However when rule changes came into the fore in the 1960s, the time allocation process was brought in. Time allocation is a kinder, gentler, milder form of ending debate. It is not closure in the rough and ready historical sense.

We need time allocation. We need more efficient management because at a certain point in time we need to move on to other important issues facing the nation. In a modern society we do not have the luxury that we had in Parliament before the first world war of not having any means to end debate.

We are not alone in that. In the United Kingdom, time allocation is almost a function of routine business. In a modern democracy we must allow time for debate but we also must end that debate to move on to all the other key legislative issues before Parliament, and that is what we are doing today.

We are not stifling anybody's right to speak. We have accepted amendments from the Bloc, other parties and from our own members but at a certain point in time a responsible government must decide to call Parliament to end the debate.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Claude Bachand:** Mr. Speaker, I rise again because the minister said something that got to me concerning the majority. I am not saying that the majority is not important; quite the contrary, I think it is important in a democracy.

However, after the majority has decided for the minority 83 times, I call that tyranny of the majority. When the minister explained that changes were made to the rules in the 1960s to introduce in a time allocation process, I did not write down everything he said, but I can tell him that the Liberals, when he was in the opposition, were probably the most vocal in denouncing time allocation.

There were entire periods when members such as our friend Herb Grey and probably the current Minister of Transport rose in this House repeatedly, while in the opposition, to condemn the tyranny of the majority.

However, now that he is part of the majority, he has become a tyrant and he has no qualms about it anymore. It is important that the government take its responsibilities. What we are saying in that respect is that the opposition also has a role to play in Parliament and that it has to be allowed to speak, particularly on bills that affect the freedoms of Quebecers and Canadians.

Not only has the minister forgotten having been in the opposition, but he is also acting as a tyrant with respect to the freedoms of citizens and parliamentarians. Did he not, when in the opposition, rise in the House repeatedly to condemn the tyrannical attitude of the ruling party at the time?

• (1205)

**Hon. David Collenette:** Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to inform the hon. member that I never sat in the opposition. I have been fortunate to be only a government member. When the Mulroney government took office, I was retired, so to speak, or to be precise, the voters in my riding retired me. I came back, however, with the current Prime Minister, the hon. member for Saint-Maurice.

*Government Orders*

The hon. member is right nonetheless; it is an opposition tactic to criticize closure on debate. That is always the case. The same is true in England, France and every legislature around the world.

[*English*]

It is part of parliamentary lore, whether it be in this country, in the United States or in Europe, that the opposition always wants to demand more time and to have further debate. That is the function of the opposition. No one should be embarrassed about it but, equally, the government should not be embarrassed about discharging its duties and saying that enough debate is enough, that it has listened and it has been sensitive.

In this case, we are dealing with something of national urgency and high priority. It affects our relations with the United States because we need to provide a more secure environment for North America. It is irresponsible to keep the debate going even further because we are not discharging our obligations to the people of Canada to have a secure country and a secure continent.

**Ms. Libby Davies (Vancouver East, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, after listening to the minister I would say that he should be embarrassed with what his government is attempting to do here by putting closure on the bill.

This is not routine business. The bill is critical in terms of security measures and the potential infringement on the civil liberties of Canadians. We can see that the government is grasping at anything as a cover to bring in closure yet again on another bill.

For anyone to suggest that this is about a modern democracy and the fact that the U.K. brings in closure all the time and therefore we should do it, so what? We are talking about the Canadian Parliament. We are talking about upholding the public interest. This is not just about the opposition doing its job or the minister doing his job. There is something very important here and it is called public interest.

If anyone ever knew about public interest it was Stanley Knowles. We should not be invoking his name and saying that Stanley Knowles knew when to cut off debate. Pierre Elliot Trudeau never invoked closure 88 times like this government has done.

Just yesterday Maher Arar was released from Syria and is finally coming home to Canada. Bill C-17 would provide enormous powers to security authorities where we could see more instances of innocent people being targeted. If that question is not a matter of public interest and something that is worthy of debate then I do not know what is.

The government should be embarrassed for trying to shut down debate on a very important bill. Bill C-17 is a package of all of these security measures. This is now the last leg the government is bringing forward. We are here to alert Canadians to what the legislation is really about.

Shame on the government and shame on the minister for yet again trying to shut down debate on this very important question affecting all Canadians.

● (1210)

**Hon. David Collette:** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Vancouver East talks about a public interest to be served. Those were her words. I agree with her.

The public interest has been served by a bill before the House for one year in three manifestations. There has been nearly 40 hours of debate here in the House of Commons, and in committee, for six months a bevy of witnesses have come forward, amendments have come forward and were accepted. That is democracy.

We are dealing with a bill that will help us provide safer air travel, secure environment for air travel, facilitate law enforcement and national security information between federal departments and agencies, and deter hoaxes that endanger the public or heighten public anxiety.

Bill C-17 would tighten explosives and hazardous substance use, as well as activities for other dangerous substances, such as pathogens, and for the export and transfer of technology.

The bill would help identify and prevent harmful, unauthorized use or interference with computer systems operated by counter-terrorist agencies and deter the proliferation of biological weapons.

These are monumentally significant to the security of Canadians. I am sorry that my friend from Vancouver East was detained and could not hear my reply. I am sure she will read it in *Hansard* a little later.

The fact is that this is an important piece of legislation covering all of those areas. We have had all of this debate. Now we must, in the words of the member for Vancouver East, ensure the public interest is served. It will be served by enacting Bill C-17.

[*Translation*]

**The Deputy Speaker:** Since there are less than two minutes left, I would ask that the question be short. The hon. member for Saint-Jean.

**Mr. Claude Bachand:** Mr. Speaker, I will be brief.

We often hear about the expression “democratic deficit”. As a matter of fact, the hon. member for LaSalle—Émard has made it the centrepiece of his platform. I think that he will have some difficulty, because he frequently went along with the democratic deficit. He has been involved in it 83 times.

The fact that he went to Halifax to make promises as the Prime Minister, that he is going to British Columbia tonight to call a members' caucus and a premiers' meeting, is this not a democratic deficit?

He is not the Prime Minister right now, but he is the one who is taking credit for being the Prime Minister. He is behaving like the Prime Minister. Then, he gives us lessons on the democratic deficit. The government and the hon. member for LaSalle—Émard have a serious democratic deficit toward the House of Commons and Quebecers and Canadians.

**The Deputy Speaker:** I would ask the hon. Minister of Transport to make a last comment.

*Government Orders*

[English]

**Hon. David Collette:** Mr. Speaker, I will not lower myself to that kind of rhetoric. We are dealing with national security issues for all Canadians.

I would hope that my friend from the Bloc would accept the fact that we have had a lot of debate. We have actually accepted amendments that have come from his party which were reasoned and most acceptable.

The hon. member should address those particular issues, rather than showing his pathological fear of the member for LaSalle—Émard. The member for LaSalle—Émard will be the next Prime Minister of Canada and he will love the opportunity to meet the hon. member's party in Quebec in the next federal election and give them what for.

[Translation]

**The Deputy Speaker:** The question is on the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

**The Deputy Speaker:** All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

**Some hon. members:** Yea.

**The Deputy Speaker:** All those opposed will please say nay.

**Some hon. members:** Nay.

**The Deputy Speaker:** In my opinion the yeas have it.

*And more than five members having risen:*

**The Deputy Speaker:** Call in the members.

● (1255)

[English]

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

*(Division No. 237)*

## YEAS

## Members

Adams	Alcock
Allard	Assadourian
Augustine	Bagnell
Bakopanos	Barnes (London West)
Barrette	Bélangier
Bellemare	Bertrand
Bevilacqua	Binet
Blondin-Andrew	Bonin
Bonwick	Boudria
Bradshaw	Brown
Caccia	Calder
Caplan	Castonguay
Catterall	Cauchon
Chamberlain	Coderre
Collenette	Comuzzi
Copps	Cullen
Cuzner	DeVillers
Dhaliwal	Dion
Dromisky	Drouin
Duplain	Eyking
Farrah	Folco

Frulla  
Godfrey  
Graham  
Guarnieri  
Hubbard  
Jennings  
Jordan  
Kilgour (Edmonton Southeast)  
Lastewka  
Lee  
Longfield  
Macklin  
Malhi  
Manley  
Matthews  
McCormick  
McKay (Scarborough East)  
Mitchell  
Myers  
O'Brien (London—Fanshawe)  
Pacetti  
Paradis  
Peschisolido  
Phinney  
Pillitteri  
Proulx  
Regan  
Rock  
Savoy  
Scott  
Shepherd  
St-Jacques  
St. Denis  
Szabo  
Thibault (West Nova)  
Tonks  
Valeri  
Whelan  
Wood— 119

Fry  
Goodale  
Grose  
Harvey  
Jackson  
Jobin  
Karetak-Lindell  
Knutson  
LeBlanc  
Lincoln  
MacAulay  
Mahoney  
Maloney  
Marcil  
McCallum  
McGuire  
McLellan  
Murphy  
Nault  
O'Reilly  
Pagtakhan  
Peric  
Peterson  
Pickard (Chatham—Kent Essex)  
Pratt  
Reed (Halton)  
Robillard  
Saada  
Scherrer  
Sgro  
Simard  
St-Julien  
Stewart  
Telegdi  
Thibeault (Saint-Lambert)  
Torsney  
Vanclief  
Wilfert

## NAYS

## Members

Abbott	Ablonczy
Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands)	Bachand (Saint-Jean)
Bailey	Bigras
Bourgeois	Breitreuz
Brisson	Burton
Cadman	Cardin
Casson	Comartin
Dalphond-Guiral	Desjarlais
Desrochers	Duceppe
Duncan	Epp
Fitzpatrick	Forseth
Fournier	Gagnon (Champlain)
Gagnon (Lac-Saint-Jean—Saguenay)	Gagnon (Québec)
Gaudet	Gauthier
Girard-Bujold	Godin
Goldring	Guimond
Hill (MacLeod)	Hill (Prince George—Peace River)
Hinton	Johnston
Keddy (South Shore)	Lanctôt
Lebel	Lunn (Saanic—Gulf Islands)
Lunney (Nanaimo—Alberni)	Marceau
Mark	Masse
Ménard	Mills (Red Deer)
Moore	Nystrom
Paquette	Penson
Perron	Picard (Drummond)
Proctor	Rajotte
Ritz	Rocheleau
Roy	Sauvageau
Schellenberger	Schmidt
Skelton	Solberg
Sorenson	Spencer
St-Hilaire	Stinson
Stoffer	Strahl
Thompson (Wild Rose)	Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest)
Toews	Wayne
White (Langley—Abbotsford)	White (North Vancouver)
Williams	Yelich— 76



PAIRED

Nil

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair):** I declare the motion carried.

[Translation]

I wish to inform the House that because of the debate on the time allocation motion, government orders will be extended by 30 minutes.

[English]

THIRD READING

The House resumed from September 29 consideration of the motion that Bill C-17, an act to amend certain acts of Canada, and to enact measures for implementing the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention, in order to enhance public safety, be read the third time and passed.

**Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to see that Bill C-17 is back on track. It is an extremely important bill. It has deep roots through a number of iterations and I want to remind members of the extent to which the bill touches matters related to safety and security issues.

Part 1 would amend the Aeronautics Act to enhance the scope and objectives of the existing aviation security regime. That is a very important part.

The amendments would permit the minister to delegate officers to make emergency directions of no more than 72 hours duration to provide immediate response to situations involving aviation security. They would permit the minister, for the same purpose, to delegate power and make security measures.

The bill would amend the Canadian Air Transport Security Authority Act; Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999; Criminal Code; Department of Citizenship and Immigration Act; Department of Health Act with regard to the health risk areas related to potential terrorist activities or other related difficulties related to terrorism; Explosives Act; and Export and Import Permits Act, by providing control over the export and transfer of technology. Most people are probably not aware of how pervasive this bill is and what it touches. I know why members are very interested in it.

Other acts that would be amended include the Food and Drugs Act; Hazardous Products Act; and Immigration and Refugee Protection Act. The amendment in Part 11 would allow for the making of regulations relating to the collection, retention, disposal and disclosure of information for the purposes of that act. The amendments would also allow for the making of regulations providing for the disclosure of information for the purposes of national security and the defence of Canada, or the conduct of international terrorists.

This is one of the most controversial parts which many members have talked about during debate.

The bill would also deal with the Marine Transportation Security Act because we have security issues on our waterways; National Defence Act; National Energy Board Act; Navigable Waters Protection Act; Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions Act; Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act, which would permit the collection and use of personal information

Government Orders

for reasons of national security. Again, it touches that area of privacy.

The bill would also deal with the Pest Control Products Act; Proceeds of Crime (Money Laundering) and Terrorist Financing Act; Quarantine Act, Radiation Emitting Devices Act; Canada Shipping Acts, and it would enact the biological and toxin weapons convention.

The House created a special legislative committee to address the bill because of its wide ranging implications. It was extremely important. Quite frankly I think the quality of the work that was done by that special committee is reflective of the need for us to consider whether standing committees, with the broad range of responsibilities that they have, are in fact the place where significant pieces of legislation should be dealt with. But that is for another day.

However, I certainly would suggest to members that down the road we give consideration as to how we deal with significant pieces of legislation; how we ensure that we do not have problems with quorum; that we have continuity of people; and that we have the proper scrutiny of legislation, particularly legislation that touches literally dozens of acts. It is extremely important and yet the current system makes that difficult under the standing committee arrangement. I raise that for further discussion that someone might want to have on the whole aspect of parliamentary reform.

Today I received a document entitled *Pole Star: Human Rights in the Information Society*. I would like to quote from it because this aspect of privacy is probably one of the most sensitive areas of discussion. It states:

Privacy includes protection of personally identifiable information and freedom from bodily intrusion. The UDHR, art. 12, provides that a person shall be free from "arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence".

● (1300)

There is one last paragraph, which states:

Any discussion of privacy moves quickly to consideration of identity and community and the interplay between these two concepts. There are two senses of identity. First, there is having and maintaining human identity, individuality, selfhood, autonomy, integrity, and personality. This includes the self-conception of who one is, the communities to which one belongs, such as family, religion and ethnic group, and one's relationship to these various communities. Secondly, there is identity in the sense of being identified, the extent of identification, the manner of identification, whether by an external token such as a card or password, or by an intrinsic token, such as a biometric or behavioural characteristic, the purpose of the identification, and when and under what circumstances identification is made, including the choice to be non-identifiable or not to be identified.

I do not know if members were able to follow all of that, but the gist of it is that there are privacy rights in our society. When it comes to security issues, now we get to a debate on what is an appropriate balance. We have gone through a period since last spring during which the Office of the Privacy Commissioner has been discredited, for a variety of reasons, as members know. Very little has been said about whether the quality of the work coming out of the privacy office was good work and was appropriate.

*Government Orders*

When I was on the transport committee, we dealt with this bill in a previous form. We had the opportunity to visit with our U.S. counterparts in Washington to discuss what they were doing in terms of airline and airport security. Not until that time did I realize how profoundly and deeply the American people were hurt by the events of September 11, 2001. I was in a meeting with my colleagues from the transport committee when a senior state official broke down in tears just while talking about the date.

That was a year after it had occurred, but they were still at the point where they were saying, "We will do absolutely anything that anybody wants who feels it would be important to have safety and security and the confidence level built up again within our people". At the time, they were hurtling toward Thanksgiving week. They were hoping that by making all these promises to do this, this, and that, right down to teaching flight attendants martial arts, it would improve the confidence level, which would be reflected in a recovery in the use of their airline system during the Thanksgiving period, which is historically the most active airline transportation period in the U.S.

As it turned out, notwithstanding that they pulled out all the stops, put everything in their bill and rammed through very quickly everything anybody could possibly think of, that Thanksgiving week only 80% of the aircraft were in operation with only about two-thirds of that 80% used to capacity. It demonstrated that the confidence level had dropped to points at which airlines were not going to survive. It demonstrated that our passenger confidence levels could never come back quickly enough to help airlines survive.

We are seeing that ripple effect in Canada, so suddenly now we have people talking about the propriety of things that might have something to do with racial profiling.

I would say that we have had pretty fiery debates on something as simple as the RCMP in the city of Kelowna being asked to put up surveillance cameras in a particular park area where there was habitual crime. Those cameras were running only when there was a report that there was a problem, only when there was a call from someone who said the cameras should be turned on because they believed there was a situation occurring or about to occur. The Privacy Commissioner of Canada actually took the RCMP to court to stop it. The interim Privacy Commissioner has abandoned the case; he said that was going too far.

• (1305)

That is the point I would like to make in my intervention. It shows that not only is this bill wide-ranging, and necessarily so, but it also touches on some sensitivities about privacy, about things like personal information about racial profiling. It touches on using information for a purpose for which it was not intended, on using information to in fact initiate, and on the sharing of information not only among departments of government but sharing information even with the United States, let us say, whose requirement was that for every flight originating in Canada and going to the United States a manifest of those passengers had to be provided in advance. Now this starts to touch things. Are we now in a North American security perimeter? Is this the beginning?

When I went through the bill the last time we debated it, as I heard the debate here, and as I look again at where we are in our focus on

the points, there was and is no question in my mind that there are legitimate concerns about the protection of the privacy rights of Canadians, but there also is a need for us to come to a balance, to balance that with the need for the security of Canada and its people.

We have had continuing threats not only to our troops abroad, as we have seen, but even in identifying Canada as a target, even to the extent we understand that the proximity of 80% of our population is within 100 kilometres of the U.S. border. Anything that happens within 100 kilometres of that border on one side or the other affects both countries. Collaboration with the United States is going to be an important element of this, but not to the extent that it compromises the fundamental privacy rights of Canadians and also, though, to the extent that it does not make security interests secondary.

In closing I will simply say that if we do not have security, then we have no sovereignty, and if we have no sovereignty, we have no country. Bill C-17 must pass now.

• (1310)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Bernard Bigras (Rosemont—Petite-Patrie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I listened to the speech by my hon. colleague concerning Bill C-17. I understand his last statement, particularly when he said that, if we do not have security, then we have no sovereignty.

I understand the need, after the events of September 11, 2001, to establish legislation and parameters ensuring public security. However, does he not feel that, rather than introduce a bill that will place some limitations on privacy, it would have been preferable to have a bill that seeks this necessary balance between freedom and security?

My hon. colleague opposite who spoke a few minutes ago is putting great store in security. However, does he not feel that freedom and rights also have a place in legislation such as the bill currently before the House?

[*English*]

**Mr. Paul Szabo:** Mr. Speaker, the member has identified a range of areas, which explains why a bill such as this one has taken so long and why so many acts have to be dealt with. It is not a linear issue but a multi-dimensional issue, which involves safety to some extent. It also involves security. It involves privacy rights. It involves the debate about a North American security perimeter. Any one of those issues in itself could easily be a bill unto itself, I suppose, but we have an urgency now and this is where it is going to call on all parliamentarians to recognize that the time we have spent to date has in fact raised all the substantive matters related to the question the member has dealt with.

*Government Orders*

Is it comprehensive enough? For some, maybe not, but we cannot wait for perfect information. There are some things we need to get in place. We need to authorize people to act so that in fact the security and safety provisions actually are in place and the privacy issues can be protected in the context of those things we must do to balance those interests and ensure the security and safety of Canadians.

• (1315)

**Mrs. Bev Desjarlais (Churchill, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I am not quite sure exactly where my colleague from across the way is coming from. He seems to indicate that there is a real issue on the privacy side, but I get the impression that somehow the issue on the privacy side just does not seem as important as everything else. I am going to ask him outright, does he think it is okay for people of the Muslim faith, or anyone who might be tied to that in some way, shape or form, to have their civil liberties attacked so that each and every one of us can feel maybe a little safer?

**Mr. Paul Szabo:** Mr. Speaker, it is a fair question. Just before September 11, I did a survey of my constituents. It was on the aging society and how this would cost more because we would have more demands on health care and pensions, et cetera. The survey said, "If the economy does not improve, we have to cut something. What do we cut?" It was very interesting to see the responses. So many of them asked why we have a defence department and said, "Why not just cut out defence and have the United States take care of us?" However, about 30% of the responses that came back after September 11 were a total reversal and asked, "Why are you not spending more on defence?" It depends on the circumstances in our world, our milieu, which do drive what we must do to respond to a real situation.

I say to the member that before 9/11 privacy issues were never challenged to the same extent that they are now, but they are not being challenged to undermine anybody's rights or to racially profile anybody. They happen to come under the whole dialogue about how, if we are going to protect safety and security, we had better look for patterns and probabilities; we cannot do a 100% job so we had better target our resources the way we can.

Unfortunately, it means that in the countries where terrorism is most prevalent, people happen to be from a particular group, whatever that group may be. It is not done for the negative reasons that the member would say it is done. In my own view, there are basic privacy rights that must be protected but we always have to ask that question whenever we take steps, whether it be steps in this bill or any other legislative or regulatory steps. We always put that privacy filter there to make sure that any information being collected or used for a specific purpose is clearly related to the security interests of Canada.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Jocelyne Girard-Bujold (Jonquière, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I have a question for my hon. colleague from the Liberal Party.

Yes, a terrible event shook the world on September 11. Yes, it did happen, but we now have to stop telling tall tales to make people believe that we have to make a greater effort on security issues and adopt more specific guidelines in this regard. We were all troubled by the tragic events of September 11, 2001. We all know what happened.

However, we cannot circumvent the Charter of Rights and Freedoms by giving such enormous powers, warrants to check on people's identity.

I would like my Liberal colleague to tell us if he would be comfortable living in a dictatorship, since that is almost what he is proposing. I believe that we live in a democracy, and in a democracy, we can ask questions and we can add more security measures, but we have to stop creating a virtual world and adapting our way of life to virtual events that might occur some day.

It is true that people need to be reassured because they have not felt secure since that day. However, we have to assure people that democracy will survive and that we will still comply with the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. They should also know that the decision makers will not have all sorts of powers that go beyond democracy.

I would like the member to tell us what the word democracy means to him.

[*English*]

**Mr. Paul Szabo:** Mr. Speaker, last week I watched the miniseries on Pierre Elliott Trudeau again. I was fascinated by the events surrounding the implementation of the War Measures Act, which was an extreme example of the suspension of human rights and democracy. Is there a case in which it would be appropriate to do that? The government of the day thought there was. I suspect the debate is still going on today.

We have to put that into the present context and say that we are necessarily at risk simply because we are the neighbour of the United States. People wonder whether airplanes from Canada could be used as weapons against the U.S. Could that happen? It is possible, if we do not have security measures, if our airports are not secure, if we do not have reasonable safeguards. What would people say if something untoward happened?

Our attitudes change depending upon the level of risk. The level of risk is not something that ducks in and out. It is something which at a point in time moves in a certain direction. Canada is very slowly becoming a place where terrorism is not absent anymore. Terrorists are in Canada. Terrorist activities occur in Canada and they occur against our troops who are serving with peacekeeping forces. Those things happen.

Canada is different today from what it was 10 years ago. I do not know whether the current sensitivities that we feel with regard to security threats will ever dissipate. If we surveyed people, I think we would find that many people feel it is probably going to get worse over time.

• (1320)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Bernard Bigras (Rosemont—Petite-Patrie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to take part today in the debate on Bill C-17, the Public Safety Act.

*Government Orders*

Before dealing directly with the topic at hand, I will say that I am always surprised by some of my colleagues' comments. One would be inclined to think that such remarks could only come from my right, but I am always surprised to see that members of a political party that gave us the charter of rights can be so far to the right.

That is what we have been hearing so far. Some members have a wild imagination and assume that acts of terrorism could potentially be committed. Such a line of thought leads inevitably to legislation that tramples on individual freedoms, perhaps creating a system where the rule of law no longer applies, but where a police state will look after the affairs of the state.

Using assumptions that have not been validated and that are quite often unfounded is embarking upon a very slippery slope.

With regard to Bill C-17, one must remember that we have had debates at one time or another, and not necessarily on similar bills. As my colleague across the way said a few minutes ago, there have been many versions of this bill. Whether Bill C-36, Bill C-42 or Bill C-55, which evolved into Bill C-17, the one before us today, there have been many changes, some substantial, others relatively minor.

My colleague across the way said a few minutes ago that he was sorry the bill had not been passed and had not taken effect all at once, the way it was. On the contrary, delaying the bill has made it better, and ensured that it will take into account a context that is not what it was when the events of September 11, 2001 occurred. Some improvements were made; I will list them in a moment.

First, we have to remember that the events of September 11 were major ones. My point is certainly not that we should stop fighting against terrorism. However, we believe that the response and the fight against terrorism must take into account the democratic values that are dear to Quebecers. We think that the bills passed in the House of Commons should reflect the balance we seek between freedom and security.

This is exactly where the problem lies. Bill C-17 is a direct attack against the most democratic rights of the citizens, their right to a certain amount of freedom. This was said not only by the Privacy Commissioner but also by several organizations.

First, it was clear that we had to oppose Bill C-36. The Bloc Québécois asked the government to include a sunset clause so that the act would no longer be operative after three years, except if the House decided otherwise.

Furthermore, the Bloc Québécois also asked that the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights automatically review the act each year, following the tabling of a report by an independent commissioner.

Why did we ask for both an annual review of the act by the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights and a sunset clause so that the act would no longer be in force after three years? We did not want the principles set out in Bill C-36, and today in Bill C-17, to become permanent changes.

Inasmuch as we feel the bill interferes with individual freedoms, to a certain extent, the question we must ask ourselves is the following: do we want to limit those freedoms permanently?

● (1325)

If that is not what we want, if the answer is no, any member who believes in the rule of law, who believes that this must be reflected in the legislation we pass, will want this legislation to be exceptional and temporary.

The three-year sunset clause, the fact that the law would have expired after three years and be reviewed each year by the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights, would have highlighted its exceptional—the exception being the events of September 11—and temporary nature, with due consideration of the fact that we want to have a society that respects the democratic values of freedom and justice.

That is what the amendments to Bill C-36, as proposed by the Bloc Québécois, would have permitted. Unfortunately, they were rejected.

The Bloc also proposed debate on other issues, for instance, the definition of a terrorist act, which is very broad and which could lead to problems for groups or individuals who are not terrorists. They also wanted the Attorney General to be able to withhold information by not applying the Access to Information Act. And, as I mentioned, there would be no further review of the bill for three years.

There was a problem with that. Naturally, the minister proposed some amendments. But in our view these amendments were clearly inadequate. I repeat that there was considerable debate. We presented solutions and constructive proposals related to limiting the scope of the legislation and including a sunset clause. That would have enabled us, perhaps, to have voted in favour of legislation that would have been exceptional, but not permanent, in order to respect the democratic values so cherished by Quebecers.

And then came Bill C-42, which gave new powers to ministers, such as adopting interim orders. In our opinion, that left much too much room for arbitrary actions. In particular, the military security zones were very poorly defined and their implementation left the door wide open to many abuses.

First, it is important to point out that, the way the bill was drafted, a military security zone could well have been declared on Quebec's territory without even consulting the Government of Quebec. The federal government, using an interim order, could have established a military security zone in Quebec, without even discussing it with the Government of Quebec.

In certain ridings, for instance that of my colleague from Jonquière, we could have ended up with these totally undemocratic zones. It harkens back in a way to our experiences during the October crisis, when the federal government had no qualms about invoking the War Measures Act. With this provision of Bill C-42, the federal government could have designated certain parts of Quebec as military security zones, without consulting the Government of Quebec.

*Government Orders*

Thanks to the efforts of the Bloc Québécois members, we were able to sort this out and avoid a recurrence of such a situation. If we had simply counted on the federal members across the way, I am not sure there would have been much awareness of this concern. So, with Bill C-55, we were able to avoid military interventions and the designation of these zones, in Quebec in particular.

This takes us to Bill C-17. It is important to go over the previous bills in order to grasp the scope of Bill C-17. We moved from C-42 to C-55, and now to C-17 which is, basically, just a new version of C-55, the Public Security Act 2002. I would remind hon. members that our interventions on Bill C-55 addressed three main themes.

• (1330)

The first was the military access zones, which we felt ought not to be created. Naturally, in Bill C-17, the federal government made a commitment and withdrew the provisions on these, and as I have said, that was a victory for the Bloc Québécois.

The second point we addressed in what was Bill C-55 at the time was the interim orders. This bill still contains provisions on these, although the time frames for tabling in Parliament and approval by Cabinet have been shortened considerably. The main problem remains unchanged, however: the absence of any prior verification for compliance.

I have reviewed the work done by the Bloc Québécois in connection with Bills C-42 and C-17. At no time has there been any provision for prior verification for compliance. Is it possible for these orders not to be implemented until it has first been verified that they do not violate the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and its enabling legislation?

Whereas in Quebec we have a Charter of Rights and Freedoms and in Canada we have a Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, we think that before using these interim orders that we feel are exceptional measures, there should be prior verification for compliance. That is one of our proposals. Prior verification for compliance with the enabling legislation and also with the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, should be considered. This would allow us to protect freedoms and the democratic values that drive Quebec. Unfortunately, there is no provision to that effect in Bill C-42, C-55, or C-17.

Finally, one of the important aspects that the member for Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel emphasized in the past concerns the issue of exchanging information on airline passengers. The proposed changes when the bill was previously reported, are largely insufficient. The framework of the proposed provisions goes well beyond the fight against terror and the provisions do not strike a fair balance, as I said earlier, between security and privacy. It is important to note that the bill will give more power than ever to the RCMP and the Canadian Security Intelligence Service in terms of gathering information.

On this side of the House, we think it would have been important to amend this bill to limit as much as possible the powers related to keeping and using the information thus gathered. We believe that these powers have to be limited because as long as we live in a democratic society, the rule of law must prevail and we must not lapse into a police state. The more the powers of the RCMP and

CSIS are reinforced, the more likely this unacceptable scenario becomes.

Given the numerous comments by the Privacy Commissioner, who was very critical of this bill—and I will end here—it is essential to achieve this balance between security and freedom.

Naturally, we are not against fighting terrorism. However, as the leader of the Bloc Québécois indicated shortly after September 11, the response must respect the underlying democratic values of Quebecers. The proposed solution must also reflect the seriousness of these events.

• (1335)

When I listen to a few colleagues on the other side of the House, but also those to my far right, I notice the numerous attempts to use the events of September 11 to establish, in Canada, permanent legislation solely to ensure safety. The resulting mechanisms pose a real threat.

In closing, I want to say that, of course, we oppose Bill C-17, although it is better than the bills previously introduced. If the bill can be improved, we will be happy to support it. However, it is important that Bill C-17 take into consideration our underlying democratic values.

**Ms. Jocelyne Girard-Bujold (Jonquière, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I want to take this opportunity to thank my hon. colleague for speaking on this bill and giving listeners a very detailed overview of how Bill C-17 came into being.

In his speech, my hon. colleague said that the democratic values relating to security must be ensured, in light of the events of September 11, 2001. It is true that this was an extremely serious event that shook the entire world. However, as my colleague mentioned, we must keep things in perspective and not generate fear by implementing measures limiting freedom and democracy.

I want my colleague to provide additional information, which he did not have time to mention in his speech. In his opinion, what measures could have been included in order for the Bloc Québécois to support this bill?

• (1340)

**Mr. Bernard Bigras:** Mr. Speaker, there are indeed two or three aspects of the bill that we would have liked to have seen changed; this might have allowed us to support the bill before us today.

First, as I said earlier, interim orders should be subject to a preliminary check, to ensure that they are consistent with the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

*Government Orders*

Again, I have a hard time understanding why my government colleagues, who are members of the political party that sponsored and introduced the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, do not want this preliminary check to be carried out to ensure that a given interim order does not violate the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Second, we would have liked a sunset clause to be included, so that the bill, or the act, would no longer be in effect after three years. This would prevent such provisions from being made permanent. This way, each year, the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights could review the act and make the necessary amendments to take into account the changing environment. As we know, the global and international environment is evolving rapidly. Things change quickly, and our safety protection legislation must be fine tuned.

We would therefore have liked, first, a preliminary check for compliance and, second, for this legislation not to be permanent but to be of an exceptional, limited nature, so that we do not move toward a police state and that we can uphold the principles and democratic values that we all share.

**Ms. Jocelyne Girard-Bujold:** Mr. Speaker, I had another question for my colleague. I would like him to talk about the government's amendments dealing with the powers of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and CSIS to access information on airline passengers. Those powers are much too broad.

I would like to have my colleague's opinion on those powers, which are much too broad. I would also like to know what kind of limitations these powers will put on privacy.

**Mr. Bernard Bigras:** Mr. Speaker, I have already touched on that. However, I will go further during questions and comments. As I said, we would have liked to have limitations put on the powers of the RCMP and the Canadian Security Intelligence Service.

It is important to recall the opinion issued on May 6 by the Privacy Commissioner, in which he said that the powers given to the RCMP had, among other things, two consequences. Some concerns had been raised at that time.

First, the RCMP is allowed to use the personal information of all air travellers for the purpose of seeking out individuals who are subject to a warrant for any offence punishable by imprisonment for five years or more. Also, the RCMP and SCIS are permitted to retain the personal information of passengers for such purposes as searching for suspicious travel patterns.

On May 6, the Privacy Commissioner was very critical of those powers. I insist in particular on the second part. Are you aware that the powers given to the RCMP and CSIS will allow them to retain the personal information of passengers? This has broad implications. It is not just about the passport. It can go much further.

We believe that the powers of the RCMP and CSIS should be limited, in the interest of freedom and safety.

[*English*]

**Mrs. Bev Desjarlais (Churchill, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague from the Bloc and certainly all those from the opposition side who continue to oppose the impact that this legislation would have on the civil liberties of Canadians. It never ceases to amaze me that we keep repeating our mistakes.

Does my colleague have particular incidents that may have happened in the last two years since the attack took place in 2001? Two years have now passed without this legislation being in place. Is there a particular instance, which he might have heard about, where Canadian authorities have been unable to respond to a terrorist threat with the legislation that is already in place?

• (1345)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Bernard Bigras:** Mr. Speaker, this is exactly why we believe that it was important to have several bills.

My colleague across the floor was saying 10 or 15 minutes ago that they would have liked the first bill introduced to be adopted to have tougher legislation. He was critical of the fact that many bills had been introduced.

For us however, studying the safety bill on three separate occasions allowed us to improve it and to ensure better protection of civil liberties.

I was talking about the secure military zone that was initially included in the government bill many months ago. On this side of the House, we have managed to have it dropped from Bill C-17. These are all initiatives that make me say that, thanks to the opposition, we have managed to protect civil liberties, because we did not let our imaginations run wild or been too precipitate.

We hope that government will listen to reason. Other aspects of this bill need to be guaranteed to ensure civil liberties are protected for all Canadians. We hope that government will soon listen to reason. I repeat for a third time that we have to try to ensure this protection. Of course we have to ensure safety, but we should never forget that freedom is also a fundamental democratic value in our society.

**Ms. Jocelyne Girard-Bujold:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to tell my colleague that in my area, in the Saguenay, there is a military base. Under the first version of the bill, all the land around the base was part of it. My town was in a military security zone. That is extremely serious. At second reading stage, I spoke out against this. The government listened and decided to make changes, with the exception of three locations.

However, under the current bill, the governor in council will be able to create military zones by order in council. We, in the Bloc Québécois, believe that Quebec should be consulted before this government goes ahead.

Is there a provision in this bill to consult Quebec before defining a controlled access military zone?

*Government Orders*

**Mr. Bernard Bigras:** Mr. Speaker, as I understand it, under Bill C-55 and Bill C-42, military security zones could be established. Regarding these bills, we felt it was unacceptable that the federal government should be able to create military intervention zones without even consulting, for instance, the Quebec government, should it decide to establish such a zone in Quebec. There was no provision under Bill C-55 or Bill C-42 allowing for such a consultation process.

We succeeded in having these military security zones dropped from Bill C-17. That is a significant improvement. As I said earlier in my speech, in Quebec we could very well have found ourselves next to a military zone. I know that plans were in place for Halifax harbour, that some areas had been previously designated.

As a result of the repeated demands of the Bloc Québécois and the amendments that were made, we now have a bill that does not mention military security zones.

• (1350)

[*English*]

**Mrs. Bev Desjarlais (Churchill, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I am glad to have the opportunity once again to raise our objections to Bill C-17.

I want to make note of the fact that it is extremely disappointing to see the government yesterday come up with an urgency for Bill C-17. It will be rammed through the House by another show of a very undemocratic process.

Tonight government members will have pizza and beer with the member for LaSalle—Émard. We had to ensure that the bill passed through the House today so that members across the way could have a pizza and beer party with the member for LaSalle—Émard to discuss the democratic deficit.

The hypocrisy in this whole issue will be shown by each and every member on that side of the House who votes in favour of the legislation. They did not want to continue this debate because they will be having pizza and beer with the member for LaSalle—Émard this evening. That is absolutely despicable, but it is the absolute reality of what is happening here in Ottawa today.

I have dealt in some manner with the bill for almost two years. I have heard numerous concerns about the issues related to civil liberties. However the bill has never once shown up since we came back in September. I do not think we had any additional discussions in committee.

The government did not raise it as an urgent bill that had to pass when its members got together to decide what will be before the House until last night, just before the House adjourned. All of a sudden it is before the House this morning. The government will ram it through today and not give people out there who have real issues with it an opportunity to do what they can to address the issues that will affect the civil liberties of Canadians.

We need to be clear where this is coming from. The transport minister can talk all he wants about how important it really is, that there has been a lot of debate, and that we have to get the bill passed. That is garbage.

It is over two years since 9/11 happened and Canada responded wonderfully when it took place. All the agencies involved were able

to do what they had to do to respond to 9/11 without the bill. They did not get any argument from members of the opposition. There was little or no criticism. The criticism comes now when we see the civil liberties of Canadians being attacked.

One of the hardest things to recognize in the whole discussion on the legislation is what I am hearing from members across the way. I am also disappointed that there are some opposition parties that will support the legislation when it has an implication on the civil liberties of a specified group of Canadians.

As a Canadian I thought we had learned something from the detention camps where Japanese and Ukrainian Canadians were held. Those were shameful moments in Canadian history. We have learned nothing. We are willing to subject another group of Canadians to the same type of approach simply because we are not of that group. That is despicable and there is no other way of looking at this.

We hear my colleague from Mississauga South who seems to go on about the privacy issues, but says that we have to protect public safety. I do not feel any safer from a terrorist when I have my makeup bag checked at the airport. Quite frankly, I feel more unsafe, because if airport security has to look in my makeup bag, it does not know what the heck it is looking for. If a terrorist wants to get through, he or she will get through because of other problems in security, not because of certain measures Canada is putting in place right now.

There were a number of organizations—very respected on the issue of civil liberties throughout the country but as well internationally—that appeared before the committee all raising the same concerns.

Our party supports most of the bill, just as I am sure my colleagues do. However, the bottom line is that the part that will affect the civil liberties of Canadians is absolutely not supportable. At the risk of that happening to certain groups of Canadians, we are not willing to support the bill. Quite frankly, my feeling a little bit safer is not as important as the civil liberties of a whole group of Canadians. And it is not because they have been identified as terrorists and not because they have identified terrorist connections, it is because we think they might be.

• (1355)

I got to hear the evidence in committee regarding the information they were going to use that they get from the airlines. If we think about it, what information do we give the airlines? We give them our names, maybe our age, maybe a credit card number, maybe not, and we get on the plane. What else do we give them? Not a whole lot. So they are going to use the name of an individual, no other connection. If one happens to have the same name as someone who has committed some type of crime that is more than a five year offence, they are going to target that person. That is the reality of what I heard in committee.

*S. O. 31*

A name is what is going to be used. I heard that from the RCMP. I did not make that up. That is what it is going to use. There are literally hundreds of thousands of warrants out there for individuals and all the RCMP is going to use is a name and maybe a cross-reference for it, and a person will be targeted. That is not acceptable.

I want to read a couple of comments that were made from different groups that appeared before our committee because it is important that Canadians know the seriousness of what is happening here.

The Canadian Association of University Teachers referenced a comment made by an Israeli-American law professor Oren Gross. He said:

A major goal of terrorist organizations is to bring about precisely that sort of response by the challenged government in order to (i) weaken the fabric of democracy, (ii) discredit the government domestically as well as internationally, (iii) alienate more segments of the population and push more people to support (passively if not outright actively) the terrorist organizations and their cause, and (iv) undermine the government's claim to its holding the moral high ground—"

That is what terrorists do and quite frankly they will have succeeded in Canada if we pass this bill without any support for the civil liberties of Canadians.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair):** I wish to inform the hon. member for Churchill that she still has 13 minutes left after question period.

## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[*Translation*]

### TRUCK RODEO OF NOTRE-DAME-DU-NORD

**Mr. Gilbert Barrette (Témiscamingue, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise in this House to pay tribute to the approximately 500 volunteers and organizers involved in the truck rodeo of Notre-Dame-du-Nord.

These volunteers have turned their truck rodeo into a major international tourist attraction. This event began 20 years ago and attracts over 60,000 visitors annually to this small community of 1,200. The rodeo generates economic spinoffs of over \$5 million.

The truck rodeo of Notre-Dame-du-Nord recorded a \$200,000 profit this year. This profit has been redistributed in the immediate and neighbouring areas to support worthwhile community projects.

My sincere thanks go to these volunteers and my warm wishes to the organizers of this truck rodeo in my riding of Témiscamingue.

\* \* \*

[*English*]

### THE ENVIRONMENT

**Mr. Bob Mills (Red Deer, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development released her annual report today. It highlights the distressing gap between federal commitments and action.

The Liberal government has been warned four times over fifteen years about pesticide management. It has taken no action. The commissioner said, "For an issue that touches health, this is unacceptable...Canadians have a right to expect better answers".

On urban road transportation, the report says that the government has no clue as to whether it will be able to meet its Kyoto commitments. HRDC is one of the biggest offenders in this year's report. This department has done nothing to assess what effects Kyoto will have on the labour market.

From Environment Canada to the infrastructure program, from Health Canada to agriculture, this year's report makes the point very clear: there is a gap between what the government has said it would do and what it actually has done, and that is nothing.

\* \* \*

● (1400)

[*Translation*]

### KIN-BALL

**Mr. Christian Jobin (Lévis-et-Chutes-de-la-Chaudière, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today in this House to promote a great but unfortunately little known sport called Kin-Ball.

This sport was invented in Canada, in Lévis-et-Chutes-de-la-Chaudière, in 1986. Since 1995, it has become increasingly popular around the world. There are now four million players in over ten countries; this number is expected to triple within five years.

To promote this sport around the world, the International Kin-Ball Federation and a sponsor-advertiser are providing schools with free Kin-balls. Given its unique rules, Kin-ball is an excellent educational tool, for many reasons.

First, the sport encourages teamwork and good sportsmanship in physical education classes.

Second, this is an accessible sport in which players take part and all the teams score.

Finally, this sport was designed to counter the social problems associated with a lack of physical activity, such as obesity and its harmful impact on health.

I wanted to talk about this sport in the House since it was designed and invented in Canada, and we should be proud of it, given its growing international popularity.

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### RADIO NORD COMMUNICATIONS

**Mr. Guy St-Julien (Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Radio Nord Communications intends to cut jobs in Abitibi-Témiscamingue by 25% to 50% by eliminating accounting, technical and TV sound positions, and by eliminating the position of script person for radio.

Radio Nord intends to decentralize its commercial production from Val-d'Or to Rouyn-Noranda and move its administration to Lachute.



I completely disagree with the fact that Radio Nord Communications Inc. is preparing to close, in the medium term, its Val-d'Or office. This means they will stop broadcasting from Val-d'Or. Commercials for businesses in Val-d'Or, Senneterre and Malartic will be produced in Rouyn-Noranda.

There will be a drop in the services offered at the Val-d'Or office in favour of Lachute. It is the beginning of the end for the Radio Nord Communications network in Val-d'Or.

I am calling on all businesses in Abitibi-Témiscamingue to take action to ensure that Radio Nord Communications keeps all its employees and maintains the radio and television services it was providing the people of Abitibi-Témiscamingue before the strike.

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[English]

#### SMALL BUSINESS WEEK

**Mr. Walt Lastewka (St. Catharines, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to inform the House that the week of October 19 to 25 is Small Business Week in Canada.

A recent survey shows that small enterprises employ close to 4.8 million or 49% of the total private labour force. Between the first quarter of 2002 and the first quarter of 2003, small business created over 163,000 jobs or 39% of net new jobs in the economy.

This year's theme is "You're the power behind the Canadian economy, let's share the energy!". Small business week is an opportunity to salute those individuals who are that power. They have not only recognized an opportunity and seized it, but have taken the steps necessary to create a business that will continue to grow and prosper in the future.

During this special week, which began as a small event in 1979, Canadian entrepreneurs will have an opportunity to celebrate their innovative ideas and to demonstrate the benefits of nurturing research and development with Canada's small businesses.

Congratulations to all small business employers and employees.

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#### IZZY ASPER

**Mr. Vic Toews (Provencher, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a Canadian icon. Today we heard the sad news of the passing of Izzy Asper, Chairman of CanWest Global Communications Corporation.

Israel Asper devoted his life and passion to excellence and quality in Canadian news. His accomplishments and contributions to Canadian media have been remarkable and he leaves a noble legacy in his beloved field of work.

Mr. Asper's contributions to this country did not rest only in his media pursuits. He gave to society throughout his career as a lawyer, in public life and he gave to his community through his many philanthropic works.

Izzy Asper was a visionary, a patriot, a voice for western Canada and a truly great Canadian. He will be missed.

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On behalf of the Canadian Alliance and official opposition, I offer my condolences to his wife Babs, to his children David, Gail and Leonard and to his countless friends and colleagues who loved and admired him. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family and friends.

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[Translation]

#### WORLD FORESTRY CONGRESS

**Mr. Gérard Binet (Frontenac—Mégantic, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the world's forest community gathered in Quebec City from September 21 to 28, for the twelfth World Forestry Congress.

Canada is proud to have been host to some 4,000 delegates to discuss matters such as partnership opportunities, forest science, economics, and the stewardship of the boreal forests.

The Government of Canada understands that our forest is much more than a source of timber. Notwithstanding the substantial contribution to Canada's economy, our forests provide social and environmental benefits that are vital to our quality of life.

In addition, the World Forestry Congress was an excellent opportunity for Canada to demonstrate to the world that our investments in skills, knowledge and innovation are contributing to a safe and healthy environment, a vibrant economy, the preservation of our natural heritage and an improved quality of life for Canadians and, by extension, for the world.

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● (1405)

#### INTERNATIONAL POETRY FESTIVAL

**Mr. Yves Rocheleau (Trois-Rivières, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, in Trois-Rivières, from now until next Sunday, the 19th edition of the International Poetry Festival of Trois-Rivières is taking place. This is a very special event, which will bring together over 130 poets from 25 countries on four continents, in this city where Gérard Godin, Alphonse Piché and Gatien Lapointe grew up.

For 10 days, in the bars and cafés, restaurants and museums, and streets and lanes of Trois-Rivières, some 5,000 people will thrill to the rhythms of the capital of poetry, known as such internationally, and justifiably proud of being the only city in the world to have erected a monument to the unknown poets, as a tribute to all poets the world over.

What can we say about the roughly 300 love poems permanently posted on the walls of our houses and other downtown establishments? The International Poetry Festival of Trois-Rivières, under the guidance of my friend Gaston Bellemare, whom I salute in passing, is in a class of its own, not only for its sheer enthusiasm but also and especially for its originality.

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[English]

#### MEMBER FOR NIPISSING

**Mr. John O'Reilly (Haliburton—Victoria—Brock, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, today is a historic day for the member for Nipissing.

*S. O. 31*

Yesterday he tied the record in his riding for being longest consecutive sitting member. Today of course he is in total possession of that record. He broke the mark set by Mr. Joseph Hurtubeise who served Nipissing from 1930 to 1945.

The member for Nipissing was first elected in 1988 and will make it an even 15 years in November, 2003.

I know I speak for the constituents of Nipissing and all members of Parliament when I say congratulations to the member for Nipissing.

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#### CANADIAN FORCES

**Mr. Jay Hill (Prince George—Peace River, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to two of Canada's fallen heroes who died last week proudly serving our nation in Afghanistan.

Corporal Robbie Christopher Beerenfenger at the age of 29 was a devoted father of three. Sergeant Robert Alan Short, age 42, was the father of a strong military family whose service to our nation was second to none. They were serving with the Para Company, 3rd Battalion of the Royal Canadian Regiment.

On Sunday I was honoured to be present for these fallen soldiers' return to Canada at CFB Trenton. Their sacrifice was not only for the betterment of the Afghan people, but for freedom loving people everywhere.

Today at noon a memorial ceremony near CFB Petawawa took place to allow grateful Canadians to pay their final respects.

I proudly wear the airborne pin today to pay homage to Robbie Beerenfenger's dream of someday becoming a fully qualified paratrooper like Sergeant Short.

Our heartfelt condolences to their families, friends and comrades-in-arms. They will be sorely missed, but never forgotten.

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#### THE ENVIRONMENT

**Hon. Charles Caccia (Davenport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, on the one hand, the Government of Canada did the right thing in ratifying the Kyoto Protocol. It has also invested nearly \$3 billion since the year 2000 toward the implementation of Kyoto goals.

On the other hand, the government is proposing a bill now before the finance committee aimed at reducing taxes on the oil and gas industry, a move which makes no sense because it would stimulate and accelerate emissions of the greenhouse gases we want to reduce to achieve the Kyoto objectives.

Evidently the finance department does not know that this government's major objective is to cut greenhouse gas emissions. Bill C-48, an act to amend the Income Tax Act, should be allowed to die on the Order Paper because it is not in the public interest and because it runs counter to a key government policy.

#### HEALTH CARE

**Mr. Greg Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest, PC):** Mr. Speaker, today with the release of the Naylor report "Learning from Sars", this government I hope will learn a valuable lesson.

The report repeats the call from the Canadian Medical Association to add \$1.5 billion over the next five years. We are all aware for the last 10 years this government has cut billions from health care. We have heard over and over again from the health care industry and from Canadian citizens that funding must be restored. The report also calls for the Canadian equivalent of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, specifically, a centre that would be arm's length from government.

The Naylor report has challenged this government to take action on health care right away, not tomorrow, not next week, but now. I sincerely hope the government is up to that challenge.

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•(1410)

[Translation]

#### MENTAL ILLNESS AWARENESS WEEK

**Ms. Madeleine Dalphond-Guiral (Laval Centre, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, October 5 to 11 is Mental Illness Awareness Week and this year the theme is "Mental Illness and the Family—Resources for Recovery".

In Quebec and in Canada, statistics show that one person in five—some six million people—can expect to experience a mental illness sometime in their life. Because mental illnesses remain largely misunderstood, families and organizations play a key role in helping those who suffer from them.

Therefore, it is with great pleasure today that I mention the excellent work being accomplished by the Corporation régionale santé mentale et travail de Laval. This non-profit organization is an umbrella for community and government agencies that offer support and integration services to clients living with mental health issues.

Thanks to the way these organizations in Laval have learned to work together to develop a high-quality network of services with the goal of social integration through work, people dealing with mental health problems can hope to have a better future.

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[English]

#### ALCATEL

**Ms. Judy Sgro (York West, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to congratulate Alcatel on once again winning a significant international contract.

Alcatel Transport Solutions Division, based in my riding, was selected to design and supply major improvements and upgrades to the London underground to meet increased passenger demands on its tube lines. Known around the world, the London underground is that city's major mass transit system. This important contract is worth \$650 million and is expected to take more than seven years to complete. It will provide jobs in both Toronto and Burnaby, B.C.

Already a major supplier of automated controls for transit systems in Asia, this contract reinforces Alcatel's reputation as the world's largest supplier and developer of high capacity automated train control systems.

I am proud that a Canadian company is leading the competition in this significant area of research and development. This is a big win for Canada.

Congratulations to the team at Alcatel on its continued success.

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#### OWEN BUREY

**Mr. Brian Masse (Windsor West, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, on October 2, 2003 a kind and gentle man, Reverend Owen Burey, passed away at the age of 67. Reverend Burey was originally from Jamaica but made his mark in Canada in many ways.

As the Pastor of Sandwich First Baptist Church, Reverend Burey taught and enlightened our community to understand the historical significance the church played in the underground railroad, as many of the bricks of the church were made by slaves escaping through the underground railroad as payment for a meal and safe haven that had been provided by a member of the congregation. It is thanks to Reverend Burey that the church was designated a national historic site, advocating for this recognition even when he was ill with pancreatic cancer.

Reverend Burey volunteered for many other groups including the Red Cross, Kiwanis club and the Children's Aid Society to name a few. It was this record that made him an ideal recipient of the Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal and other prestigious awards.

On behalf of my colleague for Windsor—St. Clair and the entire New Democratic Party caucus, we extend our condolences to Reverend Burey's loving wife and family.

Reverend Burey's motto was "A winner never quits and quitters never win". Our thanks to him for never quitting on our community.

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[*Translation*]

#### VETERANS

**Mr. Jean-Guy Carignan (Québec East, Lib. Ind.):** Mr. Speaker, on September 12, I attended a training workshop by the Memory Project for war veterans in the Québec City area with an interest in helping to preserve Canada's oral history.

This project, begun six years ago as the result of concerns about history's waning status on the school curriculum, is now in every province. Last year alone, over 1,000 veterans visited a total of over 100,000 Canadian students all over the country.

*S. O. 31*

The Memory Project facilitates intergenerational dialogue on important historical and contemporary issues. This bilingual educational program brings war veterans and young people together, either face to face or via the Internet. The program was developed by the Dominion Institute, a national not-for-profit body dedicated to the promotion of Canadian history.

I encourage all teachers to invite a veteran to their classroom for a really enriching experience. We thank our veterans, who are our living memory, and our young people, who are making sure that this memory is preserved. We also thank the Dominion Institute, for having found a way to bring the two generations together.

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● (1415)

[*English*]

#### MAHER ARAR

**Ms. Marlene Catterall (Ottawa West—Nepean, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Maher Arar is finally a free man, back where he belongs in Canada, enjoying his first full day with his family in over a year.

I want to thank everyone for their untiring efforts to have Mr. Arar returned safely home, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Prime Minister, members of Parliament, the NGOs and individuals who have worked ceaselessly for his freedom. I want to pay tribute especially to two people, first to Gar Parady, now retired director general of consular affairs, for his relentless pursuit of justice for Mr. Arar and to the public servants who worked with him on this file; and above all, to Mr. Arar's wife, Monia Mazigh. Her unfailing faith in her husband, her eloquence in defending his rights as a Canadian citizen and her persistence in arguing his case have shown an unbelievable courage.

There are questions to be asked and to be answered, but today is for celebrating and wishing the family our best.

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#### ELK INDUSTRY

**Mr. Gerry Ritz (Battlefords—Lloydminster, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, Bob Nelson of Lloydminster, Saskatchewan asks why the Liberals continue to ignore the elk industry while it struggles alone to restore markets unfairly restricted by a couple of cases of chronic wasting disease. Sounds familiar, does it not? A viable industry is being hammered by foreign politics while these Liberals sit on their hands. Bob writes "The industry has lost over \$32 million in sales to Korea, as well as around \$10 million per year in live animal sales to the United States".

### Oral Questions

Both Korea and the U.S. have chronic wasting disease in their own herds, so protection from Canadian animals is not an issue here. Back in March of this year I wrote to the Minister for International Trade to demand an explanation of what his department has done to resolve this issue. So far, there has been no response and no resolution.

The Canadian market for elk and their nutrient rich antler velvet involves 79,000 animals and an annual value in excess of \$50 million. Why do the Liberals always let other countries walk all over our producers?

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## ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

### MEMBER FOR LASALLE—ÉMARD

**Mr. Chuck Strahl (Fraser Valley, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, the new Liberal leader is apparently governing in his own private parallel universe. He travels the country announcing parallel disaster relief programs. He convenes parallel meetings with the first ministers. He is planning a parallel federal budget. Now, apparently for no more of a reason than he wants to stick the current Prime Minister in the eye, he is planning parallel caucus meetings.

Is the Prime Minister prepared to rein him in, or is the government planning a parallel question period so that at least we can hold him accountable for his actions here in the House of Commons?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, that question comes from a member who tried to form his own party and failed. When the question comes from a party that has had four different leaders and three different names, I think after 10 years of good government that we have given to the country, that type of question shows that the Alliance is not ready to form a government in the next 10 years.

**Mr. Chuck Strahl (Fraser Valley, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, we all know why he is a lame duck Prime Minister.

This is why it is important. The new Liberal leader has assumed the role of defence minister by promising funding for disaster relief. He acts like the intergovernmental affairs minister by setting up his own federal-provincial conferences. He is a de facto finance minister, announcing billions of dollars in new initiatives. Now he is calling his own caucus meetings because the regular ones are not democratic.

Why with so many ministerial roles apparently available to the new member is there so little accountability for his actions here in the House of Commons?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, someone was telling me a minute ago that they look like the Keystone Cops from the old days on the other side. They are all bumping into each other and so on. I do not know why they have a problem.

I was a candidate to be the leader of my party in 1984. I had many meetings with my supporters who came to discuss things with me. I was a candidate in 1990 and members of Parliament met with me to discuss what would happen at the convention. I think it is absolutely

normal. It would be very undemocratic if there were to be no meetings at all.

**Mr. Chuck Strahl (Fraser Valley, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, speaking of bumping, the member for LaSalle—Émard bumped that guy right out of office.

Generally, members of Parliament who are concerned about the democratic deficit do not just talk about it over beer and pizza in a closed door meeting. They take part in debates here in the House. They participate in committee work. They speak out when the government invokes closure and they actually show up when there is a vote.

Would the House leader appoint the former finance minister to a committee, any committee, finance, procedure and House affairs, something, to give him some meaningful work so that he can participate in the democratic process in an open way instead of behind closed doors?

• (1420)

**The Speaker:** I have grave doubts that the question is in order, since it is hardly the administrative responsibility of the government to appoint members to committee. That is the role of the striking committee in the House. Everyone knows the government has very little to say on that, except possibly for the chief government whip.

I think we will move on to the next question.

**Mr. Monte Solberg (Medicine Hat, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, a lame duck with lame answers.

Right now the House of Commons finance committee is going through prebudget meetings. Witnesses have been invited to the committee to present their budget ideas.

My question is for the vice-chair of the finance committee. Why should witnesses bother presenting ideas for the next budget when the new Liberal leader is already running around the country announcing the next budget?

**Hon. John Manley (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I know there is very little that the member for Medicine Hat has to offer to the next budget process. That would be similar to what was offered last year by the Alliance Party.

In the meantime, the witnesses that are appearing today, and in the last few weeks and in the weeks to come before the finance committee are providing an important source of input for the government to consider in preparation of the next budget. The member for Medicine Hat dismisses their hard work, their earnest presentations and their serious ideas but I can assure him that the government does not.

**Mr. Monte Solberg (Medicine Hat, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I think that is a hilarious answer coming from a minister who says he has been neutered by the new Liberal leader's parallel government, neutered in his ability to bring forward a new budget. I am sure that is very painful.

*Oral Questions*

My question again for the vice-chair of the finance committee is, would he not agree that one way of closing the democratic deficit would be to have the new Liberal leader appear before the finance committee to answer questions about all of his recent budget announcements? Would he not agree with that?

**Hon. John Manley (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it was only recently that the hon. member was talking about feeling very amorous and now he is into neutering. I am not quite sure what happened when they met in that orchard, but these marriages can be arranged sometimes with a shotgun.

We are prepared to hear what people have to say in preparation for the next budget. The government is perfectly capable of taking that onboard and taking it into consideration as the preparation—

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for Laurier—Sainte-Marie.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**TAXATION**

**Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, Quebec minister Benoît Pelletier has reminded Ottawa that there is a real fiscal imbalance. He said that, with all its money, the federal government can afford to look after its own jurisdictions properly, start paying off the debt and invest in areas of provincial responsibility, while the provinces can barely keep their heads above water. That is what the Quebec Liberal minister said.

If Ottawa is serious about wanting to cooperate, what is the Minister of Finance waiting for to recognize the fiscal imbalance and give Quebec the financial means to look after all of its jurisdictions?

**Hon. Stéphane Dion (President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, while there is no fiscal imbalance, there is an obligation to support one another. The Government of Canada is doing its best to help the provinces live through difficult times in the western world. As the leader of the Bloc Québécois may or may not know, the United States is currently faced with an enormous deficit. For the State of California alone, it is upwards of \$30 billion. In Europe, it is increasingly difficult for countries to keep their deficits below the 3% of GDP target. In Canada, we are still able to generate a surplus, and we want to use it to strengthen the Canadian economy, including that of the provinces.

**Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, as the minister may or may not know, there is a surplus in Ottawa, but there are deficits in nine provinces, and \$45 billion has been stolen from the unemployed. He should also know that.

A change in leadership, whether in Quebec City or in Ottawa, will do no good, since the future prime minister also denies the existence of a fiscal imbalance.

Will the Minister of Finance recognize that, regardless of the party in power in Quebec City, be it the PQ or the QLP, the federal government will never admit that Ottawa has the money, while Quebec City has to meet urgent needs in health, among other things?

● (1425)

**Hon. John Manley (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am very proud of the fact that we have had sound management at the federal level. We now have the best record among G-7 countries in terms of deficit reduction and debt reduction.

Nevertheless, I might add that I understand very well why the Quebec finance minister is asking Ottawa for more money. It is because the PQ left them with a fiscal disaster in the province of Quebec.

**Mr. Pierre Paquette (Joliette, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, perhaps the Minister of Finance is not aware of this, but Canada's provinces are heading for a total deficit of \$10 billion by the end of the fiscal year in March 2004, while the federal government continues to show a sizeable surplus.

While the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs floats in the calm waters of the federal surplus, the provinces are swimming for their lives because they must provide services to the public and they lack resources.

Is the Minister of Finance finally going to return to terra firma and notice the fiscal imbalance, as experienced right now by the provinces?

**Hon. John Manley (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased that the hon. member is so optimistic about the surplus at the federal level. I would like to tell him that on November 3 I will present this year's economic fiscal update for the government. We will see whether there is a surplus, and whether or not it is large this year.

We all know that there have been some rather difficult situations this year, affecting us not only at the provincial, but also at the federal level.

**Mr. Pierre Paquette (Joliette, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, France St-Hilaire, Vice President—Research of the Institute for Research on Public Policy, recently declared, and I quote: “—the federal surplus is likely to grow considerably—, while the provinces' fiscal situation is considered 'precarious'.”

Does the finance minister not understand that it is always the same citizen who pays and who has had enough of paying Ottawa for programs he or she should not be paying Ottawa for if Ottawa got out of the areas of provincial jurisdiction on which it is encroaching, and if it freed up the necessary tax room so that provinces could assume their own responsibilities.

**Hon. John Manley (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I do understand. But perhaps the hon. member does not understand that we have not only the same taxpayers, but also the same sources of revenue as the provinces.

We have had good management in the federal government, and because of that, we have had some success with our fiscal situation.

Nevertheless, this year, not only were we affected by a slower rate of growth than predicted, but we also had to face serious situations at home and even in Iraq and Afghanistan. There have been expenditures that were completely unforeseen back in February.

*Oral Questions*

[English]

**FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

**Mr. Bill Casey (Cumberland—Colchester, PC):** Mr. Speaker, the wife of Maher Arar recently made public that the RCMP came to their home in January 2002 asking to interview Mr. Arar.

Will the Solicitor General confirm what the Arars have already made public?

**Hon. Wayne Easter (Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member knows full well that as Solicitor General I do not speak on operational matters of the RCMP. It would be inappropriate to do so and I do not intend to do so today.

**Mr. Bill Casey (Cumberland—Colchester, PC):** Mr. Speaker, the fact is that the Solicitor General is very selective in what he will release and what he will not release, which is operational details.

He has said that the RCMP was not involved in the decision, which was an operational detail, but he will not release other information that we want.

The fact is that every person in that committee hearing today and every Canadian now know that information that came from Canadian authorities resulted in the incarceration of Maher Arar in Syria for a year.

Will the Minister clear the air, clear his reputation and call for a public inquiry now?

**Hon. Wayne Easter (Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I categorically reject the premise of the hon. member's question.

What Canadians do know are the facts. The fact is that the RCMP was not involved in the decision by the United States authorities to arrest and deport Mr. Arar. The hon. member opposite may not like that fact but that is the fact and he need not allege otherwise.

\* \* \*

**HEALTH**

**Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg—Transcona, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health and it has to do with the report of the national advisory committee on SARS.

It was pointed out that it has been over 10 years since not only this government but other levels of government were given warnings about what might happen in the absence of certain kinds of preparedness. There has been a recommendation for the creation of a national officer of public health.

Could the Minister of Health tell us today if that recommendation will be implemented and will she tell us that we will not have to wait, never mind 10 years but not even 10 weeks, until such time as this kind of recommendation is implemented?

● (1430)

**Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member raises a very serious question.

First, I want to thank Dr. Naylor and the advisory committee for the outstanding report that they released today entitled "Learning from SARS: Renewal of Public Health in Canada".

I want to reassure the hon. member and all Canadians that we take seriously the recommendations of Dr. Naylor and his committee, including those around the creation of a national public health agency and a chief public health officer.

I also want to reassure Canadians that my provincial-territorial colleagues and I are committed to working together toward renewing our public health infrastructure.

**Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg—Transcona, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the government came in for some criticism from this commission but health care workers were commended and yet, ironically, the government still has its job while the health care workers are losing theirs.

Is the Minister of Health prepared to intervene on behalf of those health care workers, who either have been laid off or are about to be laid off, with her new friend at Queen's Park and ensure that health care workers, who gave so much during the SARS crisis, are not paying for it now with their jobs?

**Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we are obviously all very aware of and thankful for the tremendous frontline efforts of health care workers in Ontario, and, in particular, in the city of Toronto, during the SARS outbreak. We know of the sacrifices that many of those health care workers and their families made to protect the health of others.

I think the hon. member is aware that health care delivery is a matter for the provinces and that therefore negotiations between health care professionals and the provincial government is a matter that does rest with the provincial government.

\* \* \*

**CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION**

**Mrs. Diane Ablonczy (Calgary—Nose Hill, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, the cost of the immigration minister's pet project, a biometric ID card, keeps climbing. A new estimate pegs the price tag at a minimum of \$7 billion. That is equal to the cost of Canada's immigration system for 20 years.

The minister lacks money for border officers, security checks abroad and to remove known foreign criminals and yet he has money to sell his ID card scheme.

Will the minister tell Canadians where he will get \$7 billion for his biometric boondoggle?

**Hon. Denis Coderre (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Lib.):** That is pretty funny, Mr. Speaker. Three weeks ago it was \$3 billion, last week it was \$5 billion and now it is \$7 billion. If I am asked the question next week maybe it will be \$10 billion.

The one thing that is clear is that society needs to have a debate on the use of biometrics.

I urge everybody to watch TV to see what will happen because tomorrow we will have experts who will talk about the need to discuss that issue.

**Mrs. Diane Ablonczy (Calgary—Nose Hill, Canadian Alliance):** Yes, Mr. Speaker, the minister's hand-picked experts.

The minister's own department is full of problems. He was caught red-handed by the courts misleading Parliament about his visa backlog. Seven billion dollars would also buy a lot of widows' pensions, health care, education, disaster relief and military equipment.

With all of those needs, why is the minister asking to waste \$7 billion on his biometric boondoggle?

[Translation]

**Hon. Denis Coderre (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is always a bit sad when people resort to personal attacks because they lack arguments.

I will give some figures, if that is what is wanted. Let us talk about the maple leaf card, the permanent resident card. The forecast total net cost for two million of these is \$22.9 million.

It is all very well to bandy figures around, to talk of billions and billions, but what is essential and important for our society, since this is being done in the rest of the world at this time, is to hold a decent and factually accurate debate and determine what Canada's role will be in this era of biometrics.

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#### FOREIGN AFFAIRS

**Ms. Francine Lalonde (Mercier, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Solicitor General refuses to clarify whether the RCMP did indeed provide information to the Americans that could have led to Mr. Arar's deportation to Syria. Yet the Americans themselves, at the highest level, have not hesitated in saying that they acted on Canadian information.

Can the Solicitor General tell me, yes or no, whether the RCMP provided the Americans with information on Mr. Arar?

• (1435)

[English]

**Hon. Wayne Easter (Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the member opposite might not like the facts but I just spent an hour before the foreign affairs committee, at which the member was there, and I, in fact, answered those questions.

I have been assured by the commissioner that the RCMP was not involved in the decision by the Americans to arrest and deport Mr. Arar. Those are the facts. Whether the hon. member likes those facts or not, those are the facts.

[Translation]

**Ms. Francine Lalonde (Mercier, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Solicitor General has never said that the RCMP did not pass on information. That is not the same thing.

CINAR, Radwanski, sponsorships, all of these are in the hands of the RCMP. There is no longer any way of getting information here in this Parliament. The government refuses to speak. This is why the Arar case requires a public inquiry in order to exonerate this citizen whose rights have been trampled on and whose very life was put in danger.

Is this country being run by the RCMP?

#### Oral Questions

[English]

**Hon. Wayne Easter (Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as I said before the committee this morning, the RCMP operated within its mandate and within the laws of the country.

I can tell members that the government, as a whole, worked strenuously to ensure that Mr. Arar was returned to Canada. He is back and we certainly are pleased to see him back in this country.

\* \* \*

#### BORDER SECURITY

**Mr. Rahim Jaffer (Edmonton—Strathcona, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday we learned that the Liberals had removed immigration officers from the Thousand Islands border crossing from midnight to 8 a.m. We now have an email from the eastern director for immigration stating that it was to allow people into the country on the honour system with the understanding that they would return the next business day.

How can the minister possibly justify reducing our border security to an honour system? Does he not know that the bad guys will not respect the honour system?

[Translation]

**Hon. Denis Coderre (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his question. His colleague asked the same thing yesterday, and I said I would look into it.

Indeed there will be changes at the Thousand Islands Bridge entry point, at Lansdowne Ontario. There will be no immigration officer on duty between midnight and 8 a.m. between October and April. There will, however, be a customs officer, who will be able to contact an immigration officer around the clock, seven days a week. What is more, under the arrangement we have with the Canada Customs and Revenue Agency, this officer could act as an immigration officer.

[English]

**Mr. Rahim Jaffer (Edmonton—Strathcona, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, at many of these border crossings the customs agents do not have access to immigration records. The minister should actually find out what is going on.

Let me inform the minister that the government has lost 34,000 deportees in its experience. We now have Immigration Canada telling its officers in Ontario to swing the border open between midnight and 8 a.m.

Will the minister confirm that it is now the policy to allow immigration cases across the border without proper scrutiny?

**Hon. Denis Coderre (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, let me repeat slowly. I just mentioned that those officials will not be there but that we will have people from customs who will have the same authority as an agent of immigration. We are available 24 hours a day in case they need us. We are there and security is our priority.

*Oral Questions*

[Translation]

**CINAR**

**Mr. Richard Marceau (Charlesbourg—Jacques-Cartier, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, when asked whether or not the government had received the RCMP investigation report on CINAR, the government House leader said he could not comment, and I quote, “on whether or not there was an investigation”. His colleague, the Minister of Canadian Heritage herself, confirmed that she had requested the RCMP investigation into the CINAR affair.

How can the government announce that it requested an RCMP investigation on CINAR and now claim that it cannot say whether this investigation has concluded and whether it has received a report?

**Hon. Don Boudria (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would not want to repeat myself, but I will have to. I told the member clearly, the first time he asked the question, that I would inquire. I did so. The member alleged that there was an RCMP investigation.

I gave an answer, a few hours later, saying that the government would not comment on whether or not there was an RCMP investigation, let alone on the investigation report.

That was true yesterday, and on Friday, and it may be a surprise to the member, but it is still true today.

● (1440)

**Mr. Richard Marceau (Charlesbourg—Jacques-Cartier, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, as friends from the days of the rat pack, he should talk to his colleague, the Minister of Canadian Heritage. No one asked the government to disclose the content of the RCMP report. All we want to know is whether the investigation has concluded and if the government received a report, that is all. There is no reason for the government to hide this information.

I will repeat my question. Yes or no, did the government receive a report following the RCMP's investigation into the CINAR affair? It is not complicated.

**Hon. Don Boudria (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, at the risk of repeating myself, the answer is not complicated either. I told the member that the government would not comment on whether or not there was an investigation, let alone whether or not there was a report, nor whether the government received the report, since this is an RCMP case and the government does not interfere in this kind of thing.

\* \* \*

[English]

**ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE**

**Mr. Kevin Sorenson (Crowfoot, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, since the Solicitor General failed to answer my questions yesterday regarding the closure of the forensic labs in Edmonton, Regina and Halifax, I am forced to ask him again today.

Are these forensic labs scheduled for closure in 2003 or 2004?

**Hon. Wayne Easter (Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, let me be clear. The Regina forensic lab is not closed or closing. Indeed, the Regina forensic lab is becoming the national lab for expertise in firearms. What that means is not less full time equivalent workers but more full time equivalent workers. It means a bigger payroll for the Regina area.

The member opposite should be standing in the House and congratulating us on what we are doing for Regina with the forensic lab.

**Mr. Kevin Sorenson (Crowfoot, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, it is unbelievable that the Solicitor General brags about the improved turnaround times for DNA testing when the fact remains that urgent cases are taking three times longer than the RCMP's very own mandated timeline.

The RCMP forensic scientists are frustrated. They are underfunded. They simply do not have the resources to do their jobs.

Is the reason they are underfunded simply because the minister is planning on phasing out the evidence recovery units and then replacing it with something else? Could the minister answer?

**Hon. Wayne Easter (Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, of course I can answer but I find it remarkably strange that the party opposite, on some Auditor General reports, talks about the recommendations but on this Auditor General report with regard to forensic labs, in which we are following the recommendations of the Auditor General, it attacks us for following those recommendations.

The facts of the matter are that we are increasing the efficiency of the system and we are establishing better turnaround times.

[Translation]

**Mr. Gérard Binet (Frontenac—Mégantic, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, having regional RCMP detachments is extremely important and very reassuring to the public.

We know that the RCMP tabled a report with the Solicitor General following a study on RCMP resources in Quebec. Statements by credible sources indicate that it has already been decided to close nine detachments in Quebec.

My question is for the Solicitor General of Canada. Can he assure us that he is continuing to study the report and that no decisions have been made to date on these closures?

[English]

**Hon. Wayne Easter (Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the member for Frontenac—Mégantic for his question and indeed for the representations from him and from his colleagues who are affected by the presence of the RCMP in other areas as well.

As with all organizations, the RCMP continually reviews its methods of delivery to ensure that its resources are aligned with its priorities. In this case, let me assure members that any decisions we make will be guided by the safety and security of Canadians and the integrity of our border.

There has been no final decision made in this regard.



## THE ENVIRONMENT

**Mr. John Herron (Fundy—Royal, PC):** Mr. Speaker, last December many Canadians and the international community expected the Canadian government to be genuine in its intent to not only ratify but implement the Kyoto accord. Many believed there was no plan that was doable and that in fact the government was just making a promise it had no intention of keeping.

Today the commissioner of the environment confirmed that the Government of Canada is behind in all its Kyoto initiatives that were examined. Is the Prime Minister content that his green legacy will be on how much time he spent on the golf course and his disingenuous ratification of the Kyoto accord rather than preserving the environment?

• (1445)

**Mr. Alan Tonks (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the government has not only been actively implementing and working toward the objectives of the Kyoto accord since the last budget, but back two budgets: \$1.7 billion under the action plan at that time was implemented toward new technologies, \$2 billion, \$1 billion of which has been on retrofitting, new technologies and looking at new forms of fuels and so on. This is a record of accomplishment that the opposition should be lauding the government for.

**Mr. John Herron (Fundy—Royal, PC):** Mr. Speaker, all money and no outcomes whatsoever.

The government has a disturbing pattern of ratifying agreements it has no intention of actually ever keeping. When no one was looking, the cabinet actually passed an order in council that delayed the species at risk legislation by another year.

Why is the government taking a Liberal, GST-esque approach to its promises on environmental public policy, whether it is species or climate change? When will it take the environment seriously and keep its promises?

**Mr. Alan Tonks (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, Lib.):** Here again, Mr. Speaker, with respect to the species at risk legislation, since June the department has been actively implementing the provisions of the species at risk legislation, in partnership with the provinces and in partnership with all the stakeholders right across the country. In fact, the foundation that has been established which would look for stewardship of those lands where species at risk would be protected is being pursued as we speak. This is a record, again, of accomplishment of the government, and it should be congratulated instead of criticized.

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## HEALTH

**Mr. Joe Comartin (Windsor—St. Clair, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the commissioner of the environment has just released a report with some very interesting facts on pesticides.

It is government policy to re-evaluate all 405 pesticides on the market, by 2006, although this process has been under way for years and today only six have been re-evaluated. All six now are either restricted in use or banned outright. At this rate, they are going to

## Oral Questions

have to re-evaluate one pesticide every two days to meet the deadline.

Will the Minister of Health guarantee that these re-evaluations will in fact be completed by 2006?

**Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to inform the House that the PMRA's re-evaluation program is making significant progress. As of March 31, 2003, 61 pesticide active ingredients have been addressed. It has resulted in the phase-out of 53 pesticides, improved safety guidelines for DEET and new standards for several organophosphate pesticides. We are making progress on behalf of all Canadians.

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## FILM INDUSTRY

**Ms. Libby Davies (Vancouver East, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, today is election day in California and if Arnold Schwarzenegger is elected governor it is very bad news for Canada. One of his main issues is to stop American companies filming movies and TV series here in Canada. The film industry is vital in cities like Halifax, Montreal, Toronto and my own city of Vancouver.

We know what has happened to the softwood, steel, auto and wheat industries. The government can barely manage damage control mode.

I would like to ask the Minister of Canadian Heritage, does she have a plan to defend—

**The Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Canadian Heritage.

**Hon. Sheila Copps (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we will terminate the plan as executed.

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## FORMER PRIVACY COMMISSIONER

**Mr. Ken Epp (Elk Island, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, it was July of 2000 and a former speech writer for the Prime Minister was being offered the position of Privacy Commissioner. There was only one problem: He had to cut a bankruptcy deal with the Canada Customs and Revenue Agency for about \$675,000 in unpaid taxes. CCRA got him to pay \$68,000 and wrote off the remaining \$607,000.

When CCRA cut this deal, did anyone in CCRA know that the former Privacy Commissioner was on the verge of an appointment to a very well paying job? Did it know?

**Hon. Elinor Caplan (Minister of National Revenue, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the member opposite knows that I cannot speak to any individual case.

What I can tell him is that the bankruptcy laws apply to everyone in Canada equally. For anyone who makes a proposal in bankruptcy which involves the Canada Customs and Revenue Agency, CCRA then becomes a creditor like any other.

*Oral Questions*

I will say to the member on the proposal in bankruptcy that, in my understanding, the timeline, which is public information, was long before; that was completed long before the decision on the appointment.

•(1450)

**Mr. Ken Epp (Elk Island, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, it is pretty hard to believe that on July 26 George Radwanski knew nothing about the job and on July 27 he got the job.

Unless he misrepresented the facts, there is no doubt that the agency knew he was about to step into a \$210,000 per year job. It should have rejected the deal and forced him to pay his back taxes.

Now, will the minister take the necessary steps to reopen this file and to recover the money?

**Hon. Elinor Caplan (Minister of National Revenue, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, what I can say is that the member opposite is wrong in his assumption. If he looks very carefully at the timeline of the information, which is in the public domain, he will know that in fact the efforts of CCRA were appropriate. We treat everyone equally and fairly under the bankruptcy act and the Income Tax Act, which we administer, and where anyone has any concerns or complaints we always investigate to ensure that people pay their fair share.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**THE ENVIRONMENT**

**Mr. Jean-Yves Roy (Matapédia—Matane, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, with regard to the Belledune project, the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans said yesterday that if ever, and I quote, “any specific information were to come to light indicating harmful effects, we would take the necessary steps”.

Did the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans not just admit that, under the Fisheries Act, he has the means to act after the fact; what then is stopping him from acting before the fact?

**Hon. Robert Thibault (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I realize that the hon. member has problems with this project and that he does not like it. There are always complaints and problems, whether it be an incinerator, an oil refinery, a pulp and paper mill or an aluminum plant. I cannot misuse federal powers to interfere in provincial jurisdiction. The province is going forward with this project, and we respect the Province of New Brunswick.

**Mr. Jean-Yves Roy (Matapédia—Matane, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Fisheries Act is a federal responsibility. Resource protection is a federal responsibility.

The people of Belledune are concerned. All the communities along Chaleur Bay fear the negative impact of this project on the resource.

Does the minister not think that there should be a moratorium on Bennett's project in Belledune, and that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure?

**Hon. Robert Thibault (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in the first proposal for Belledune, there was a plan to discharge water into Chaleur Bay. That required a response as it would have had an impact on the habitat. The department was required to respond. The project was amended to include a closed

system, and no waste water will be discharged into the water at Belledune. Therefore, the department has no jurisdiction here.

\* \* \*

[English]

**AGRICULTURE**

**Mr. Rick Casson (Lethbridge, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, the Canadian Cattlemen's Association and the U.S. beef association are both calling for the harmonization of health standards in cattle. Industry on both sides of the border is in agreement. Harmonized health standards are essential to an open border and normal trade.

Why will the government not listen to industry, accept the science, remove the barriers and get the border open?

**Hon. Lyle Vanclief (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member fails to recognize the fact that before these types of things have to happen we need to have all the scientific risk assessments taken.

I understand, and I have heard him very clearly, that the industry wants it open, and there is no question that we want our borders open as much as we possibly can. But we have to recognize, for the health of the whole cattle industry in Canada and for the health and concerns of humans in Canada, that all of the disease and the risks that go around that have to be taken into account.

That we will do. When that risk assessment is completed, then we will act upon that risk assessment.

**Mr. Rick Casson (Lethbridge, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, the risk assessments have been done over and over again. The industry says the risk is manageable. It is willing to take the risk. It is this minister who is standing in the way of that open border.

The government has a clear choice to make. It can do the right thing, and remove the barriers, harmonize the health in cattle and get the border open, or it could keep the border closed and be the grim reaper when it comes to the cattle industry in Canada.

**Hon. Lyle Vanclief (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the risk assessment has been done and is being redone as we speak. The risk assessment results to date have indicated clearly that to this date the border should not be open, but in that stage, even with that, some pilot projects were done this year so that risk assessment continues. I remind the hon. member again that all risk assessments by the scientists, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency and Health Canada to date have indicated that the border should remain closed.

\* \* \*

•(1455)

**CANADA CUSTOMS AND REVENUE AGENCY**

**Mr. Paul Bonwick (Simcoe—Grey, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the minister responsible for CCRA. Since becoming an agency, Revenue Canada has effectively become judge, jury and executioner, with virtually no accountability to the Government of Canada.

In the last three years, we have witnessed CCRA officials aggressively pursue outstanding penalties on elderly widows, terminally ill people and large families.

The collection tactics used in any other realm would be inappropriate and unfair. What is the minister going to do to correct this totally unacceptable action before more families are ruined?

**Hon. Elinor Caplan (Minister of National Revenue, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in fact, CCRA prides itself in treating all Canadians fairly. There are fairness provisions in place and the statistics tell a very important story. Last year 41,000 individuals who were having difficulty paying their taxes received a break when it came to interest and penalty, through the fairness provisions, which resulted in forgiving some \$166 million. Last year as well, 1.9 million everyday Canadians were assessed and got a total of \$321 million back, while 477 corporations paid an extra—

\* \* \*

#### VETERANS AFFAIRS

**Mr. Roy Bailey (Souris—Moose Mountain, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, many Canadians are aware that the Prime Minister and his cabinet are currently reviewing the legislation that excludes 23,000 war veterans' widows from the independence program. If this study is truly a government priority, it should have been discussed in cabinet this morning.

My question is for the Prime Minister. When can Canadians expect the long awaited announcement that all veterans' widows will be included in this program?

**Hon. Rey Pagtakhan (Minister of Veterans Affairs and Secretary of State (Science, Research and Development), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased that the member continues to maintain interest in the issue, and I am pleased that all members of Parliament continue to maintain an interest in this issue although the member had claimed that this was only his issue. I am very pleased that we have been able to extend to date benefits to the widows, some 10,000 of them.

**Mr. Roy Bailey (Souris—Moose Mountain, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, if I heard the news right, I am delighted on behalf of the Liberals but despite pleas from the veterans' widows, the veterans' associations, the national media and his own government members; I appreciate, and thousands of people across Canada are going to be happy today, when this announcement becomes complete and these war widows have the money in their hands on November 11.

**Hon. Rey Pagtakhan (Minister of Veterans Affairs and Secretary of State (Science, Research and Development), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as I said earlier here, it was not for lack of will nor for lack of heart. We are committed to resolving this issue. I just would like to say that we extend as well some \$185 million for the veterans independence program for the veterans themselves.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

#### OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

**Mr. Benoît Sauvageau (Repentigny, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, here is an example of the language used in ads on Human Resources

#### Oral Questions

Development Canada's website, "L'équipe de demoiselles est intéressées par des individus mûrs et responsables".

After 35 years of operation of the Official Languages Act, how can the Minister of Human Resources Development justify posting such poor and demeaning translations on its website? Will respect ever be shown for French in her department?

**Hon. Stéphane Dion (President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his question.

We are hunting out this kind of unacceptable linguistic nonsense. The fact is, however, that Canada has been a leader in promoting the use of French on the Internet worldwide and that, in the early 21st century, Canada developed an action plan for official languages, which the Commissioner of Official Languages described yesterday as the single greatest act of leadership for bilingualism in Canada since the Official Languages Act was revised in 1988.

Canada will take advantage of its good fortune, since both its official languages are used internationally.

\* \* \*

[English]

#### LABOUR

**Mr. Shawn Murphy (Hillsborough, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Labour. The minister recently travelled to Salvador, Brazil to attend the 13th Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labour. Could the minister please inform the House of the outcome of this meeting?

• (1500)

**Hon. Claudette Bradshaw (Minister of Labour, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as Canada's Minister of Labour, I have chaired the conference for the last two years. In Salvador I handed over the chair of the conference to the Brazil minister of labour.

At the conference, labour ministers from 34 countries in the Americas adopted a declaration and action plan that focused on poverty reduction and creating decent work in the hemisphere.

The conference addresses some key issues of our time and I am pleased that Brazil will continue Canada's initiative to actively involve business—

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for Palliser.

*Oral Questions***EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE**

**Mr. Dick Proctor (Palliser, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, that only one-third of women are eligible for employment insurance benefits is made worse because airline attendants are no longer considered flight crew. Although the airlines want this ridiculous ruling reversed, and employees were assured by the transport committee last May that relief was imminent, nothing has changed. Seventy-five per cent of flight attendants are women and hundreds pay full EI premiums despite being ineligible for full time benefits.

When will the government stop discriminating against the predominantly female workforce by treating them the same way they treat predominantly male pilots?

**Hon. Jane Stewart (Minister of Human Resources Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I can tell the hon. member that when hours of work are restricted by federal or provincial statute, the Employment Insurance Act considers full time employees to have 35 insurable hours per week. There is currently no statute that limits work weeks of flight attendants in this way.

We have advised the airlines, however, that they should count not only flight time but also ground time. The employers are currently remodelling their reporting systems, but we have a system in place so these employees can receive benefits.

\* \* \*

**ORGANIZED CRIME**

**Mr. Chuck Cadman (Surrey North, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, last year the RCMP reported that marijuana grow ops are epidemic. Last spring the Solicitor General saw the problem firsthand in my riding. Last month another RCMP report revealed that international drug gangs are spreading across Canada.

Grow ops threaten communities with drive by shootings, home invasions and house fires. Apparently the Prime Minister thinks that marijuana use is some kind of joke. Families living next door to grow ops do not share his humour.

Why is this government dragging its feet in addressing marijuana grow ops despite repeated warnings from the RCMP?

**Hon. Wayne Easter (Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member opposite is talking about increasing penalties for marijuana grow ops, we have announced that we want to do that in our national drug strategy and I expect him to be more supportive in terms of that strategy than it has been to date.

We just had a federal-provincial-territorial ministers meeting where, yes, we talked about the problem of marijuana grow ops. The fact of the matter is that the proposal, which was proposed under the national drug strategy, will go a great distance to deal with this problem on the ground of marijuana grow operations.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**NATIONAL DEFENCE**

**Mr. Claude Bachand (Saint-Jean, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the tragic death last Thursday of two Canadian soldiers in Afghanistan, in addition to their three comrades who were wounded, raises many

questions on the type of equipment used by the Canadian Forces as well as on its contribution.

Will the Minister of National Defence admit that, before committing armed forces to any new operations and procuring any new and expensive equipment, thought must be given to the role we want the Canadian Forces to play? When will the defence policy be reviewed?

**Hon. John McCallum (Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, there are many questions indeed. But now is not the time for these questions, as the army is holding in Pembroke a service to honour two of its fallen soldiers. I will tell the House this: everyone should read or hear General Hillier's extremely moving words.

\* \* \*

● (1505)

[English]

**PUBLIC SAFETY ACT, 2002**

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-17, an act to amend certain Acts of Canada, and to enact measures for implementing the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention, in order to enhance public safety, be read the third time and passed.

**Mrs. Bev Desjarlais (Churchill, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank you for the opportunity to continue my comments on Bill C-17. I have to admit it was hard for me to stop in mid-stream when I was commenting on this government's lack of consideration for the civil liberties of individual Canadians. However I have heard some cases which are still happening, and I will make a point of trying to get back on track as quickly as I can.

I want to report a number of things that have come about as a result of Bill C-17 and some of the other legislation that has had an impact on Canadians.

In the *Globe and Mail* an article dated Thursday, September 11 reported former solicitor general Warren Allmand commenting on some of this legislation. It said:

In November, he complained of "the diminishing role and influence of democratic institutions" and "an increasing lack of transparency in our governance processes." He fears "we run the risk of gradually falling prey to an authoritarian style of governance not much different from the regimes we condemn.

Also:

In July, the RCMP's civilian watchdog warned that the RCMP may be misusing its new antiterrorism powers. Shirley Heafey, chairperson of the Commission for Public Complaints Against the RCMP, says her organization is being hindered in investigations and not being given access to needed information.

Those comments are coming now, even before we put in place another piece of legislation which will more severely restrict access to this information and ensuring the rights of Canadians. That is unacceptable.

*Oral Questions*

There is another quote I want to read and many of us over the course of our lifetime may have heard this. It is a quote by a Reverend Martin Niemoeller. He said:

In Germany, the Nazis first came for the communists,  
and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a communist.  
Then they came for the Jews,  
and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a Jew.  
Then they came for the trade unionists,  
and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a trade unionist.  
Then they came for the Catholics,  
but I didn't speak up because I was a protestant.  
Then came for me,  
and by that time there was no one left to speak for me.

Reverend Niemoeller was a German Lutheran pastor who was arrested by the Gestapo and sent to Dachau in 1938. He was freed when the allied forces came in 1945.

Who in Canada will speak up for the numerous Canadians, a good number of them of Muslim and Islamic background, whose rights are being infringed upon as we speak, simply because somehow it seems like it has become okay to racial profile because someone is from that background?

How have we so quickly forgotten what we did in this country to Japanese Canadians? How have we so quickly forgotten what we did to Ukrainian Canadians? These are shameful periods in our history.

Now the government is going to push through legislation that is going to do the same thing to another group of Canadians. It is not okay. Anybody who supports this legislation without ensuring that safeguards are in place to protect every individual in the country, is failing to do his or her job. It is not acceptable.

It would not mean changing the whole bill. What it would mean is we would be ensuring that safeguards were in place and that we would not be saying that it was okay to do this. I cannot help but wonder this. Is there this arrogant kind of attitude out there that because we are the white girls or boys down the street and we were born in Canada or because we are white guys from western Canada and we are farmers they will never touch us, so we should not worry about it?

I ask every Ukrainian Canadian to think about this. I ask them to let their members of Parliament know it was not acceptable when it happened to them and it is not acceptable now when it happens to others. We have to be given the right of not being considered a terrorist just because of one's name, or religious background or where one was born. That is not okay.

● (1510)

Without question, this is the most serious piece of legislation that I have seen before this House in the whole time I have been here. I probably did not feel quite as active about this when it first came up because I did not see it that way and thought that we have to protect the security of everybody.

As I heard more witnesses and as I was going through security week after week, day after day, I was feeling sick and tired of having everybody go through my stuff—and I was not even thinking that I was being considered a terrorist. I was getting annoyed with the

infringement on my privacy as my items were being searched piece by piece.

One day while I was sitting in the plane, some people boarded who might have been of Arabic, Islamic or some other culture. I watched the uneasiness of passengers in the plane as they got on. I was also sickened because I actually felt a little of that uneasiness and thought “Is it safe?”. All of a sudden it was like this hammer hitting me in the head, and I thought, “Oh, my God, what am I doing?”

This is what happened to every black man who used to be accused of being a thief, or aboriginal persons who were not honest simply because they were aboriginal. And this same thing was happening. It was so much in the forefront that it was not acceptable.

We must do whatever we can to ensure that when we put legislation through this House it will not be a blanket piece of legislation that would allow the RCMP, CSIS, whoever, to get at these individuals.

I will read a few more comments about what has been happening. In regard to someone who was picked up in Canada for being a possible terrorist suspect:

Little or no evidence has been revealed to support the accusations, the protesters said. Federal security certificates allow the government to argue in court to deport the men while keeping most supporting evidence secret, even from the defendants

That is one of the concerns we have about the bill, that even those being accused would not be able to get all the information. They would not be able to access legal counsel, they would be able to be detained, and things could be used against them without them ever knowing.

Here is another comment.

We're asking for fair process...I'm a Canadian citizen. I should be able to know why the government wants to separate me from my husband.

Not so, says lawyer Clayton Ruby, who helped argue for a more open process in Canada's top court—and lost.

When it comes to allegations of terrorism, courts have said they won't interfere with government powers that are open to “huge abuse”, Ruby said in an interview.

But that's what the courts have said to Canadian people: you have no choice but to trust your government

I am sorry, but I do not trust the government. The government stood behind numerous people while within its own departments they defrauded Canadians, took money and did not account for, and had lavish spending. I do not trust the government to speak out on behalf of Canadians. The government has literally turned the lives of Canadians over to foreign governments without standing up for them. I am sorry, but I do not trust the government to do that. We must ensure we have some rules in place.

I will not make a point of commenting on the situation with the Canadian who was arrested and turned over and ended up in Syria. I think there will be opportunities for that to happen a bit later. But I will make a few other comments because these are the serious situations that we have to keep in mind that would get much worse if this bill is put in place.

● (1515)

The following is from the September 30 *Globe and Mail*:

### Oral Questions

Both the CSIS and the RCMP can be commended for investing a great deal of energy and expertise in protecting Canada's security. But along with their diligence comes the dark reality that they are also targeting a religious minority—with devastating consequences.

A Muslim receiving a personal call from CSIS or the RCMP at work could easily lose his job. After all, who wants to hire someone who has drawn the interest of security agents? If such a call is received at home, family, friends and neighbours are subjected to stress and fear.

We are not talking about somebody we know nothing about or someone who has terrorist ties. We are talking about ordinary Canadians.

Young Canadian Muslims embarking on careers can no longer even think of applying for jobs with CSIS, the RCMP, Canadian armed forces, their local police service, or in commercial aviation.

This is a result of legislation like Bill C-17. If we allow this type of legislation to go through, we will make their life that much more difficult.

On the second anniversary of 9/11 the Canadian Islamic Congress urged Ottawa to establish an independent commission to look into the impact of the tragedy and subsequent anti-terrorism measures on civil liberties in the country. Nothing has been done to assure those individuals that they will be protected. The government will not stand up for them.

I listened to the comments of my colleague from Mississauga South who indicated that this was part of the risk, this was one of the things they had to put up with so that the rest of us could feel more secure. That is what the government said to Ukrainian Canadians and to Japanese Canadians, and it is not acceptable.

That was a shameful time in our history, and each and every one of us is repeating it. Anybody who supports this legislation will be part of that shameful history. Years down the road when we are saying that we are sorry and asking for a statement of apology from the government, each and every member who supported Bill C-17 better think about it because they will be part of that shameful history.

We should not pass Bill C-17 until it is changed to ensure that civil liberties cannot be in doubt and cannot be questioned, and ensures that people have the right to recourse. I encourage my colleagues not to accept Bill C-17 as just another bill. It is not. Bill C-17 would have absolutely devastating effects.

Warren Allmand commented that certain groups had been investigated because of possible affiliations with terrorism or challenges to security. Those groups included Amnesty International, Greenpeace, and different labour unions. Numerous organizations and anti-globalization movements that do extremely credible work were being targeted because it was felt that they were a threat to security. The democratic voice of Canadians is being stifled.

**Mr. Svend Robinson (Burnaby—Douglas, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I wish to commend my colleague from Churchill for speaking out so eloquently and forcefully against Bill C-17 on behalf of the New Democratic Party caucus.

I would like to make a brief comment on the destructive impact of the government's approach to civil liberties since September 11, 2001.

We recently learned that the oversight body of the RCMP that has the responsibility for ensuring that Canadians who have concerns about the abuses of power by the RCMP has said that it is powerless when it comes to dealing with abuses under the anti-terrorism legislation, Bill C-36. Shirley Heafey, the head of the RCMP civilian watchdog, the RCMP Public Complaints Commission, said:

We can't (investigate) unless there's a complaint, and even if there is a complaint... we can't see the information. So for all practical purposes, there's no civilian oversight.

Just today a group of prominent Canadians in the international civil liberties monitoring group have called for an independent inquiry into the serious abuses around the deportation of Maher Arar to Syria by the United States and the possibility that there may have been collusion with the RCMP. There was no oversight body whatsoever on that. The minister responsible for the RCMP stonewalled and covered up on that issue as well.

I remember when Bill C-36, the anti-terrorism legislation, was passed. We were promised that there would be full and effective oversight. We were told there would be no problem. New Democrats rejected that bill then as an assault on our civil liberties just as we are rejecting Bill C-17 today as an assault on our civil liberties.

I wonder if the hon. member might comment with respect to the total absence of any meaningful safeguards in Bill C-17.

● (1520)

**Mrs. Bev Desjarlais:** Mr. Speaker, absolutely and certainly I want to acknowledge what my colleague is saying.

The record of the government should have everybody just shaking in their boots. We should not expect any kind of representation or fair recourse because it has not been there from the government. I recall an answer given by the Minister of Foreign Affairs in question period one day. His reasoning for how Maher Arar ended up in trouble was that he had another citizenship as well.

Well, I am sorry, Mr. Speaker. Individuals should not have to apologize if they were born somewhere else or had citizenship of another country, then came to Canada and became Canadian citizens, lived here for years and were active participants in our society. In turn, the Canadian government has turned its back on them. Because we want to buckle down to possibly appeasing the U.S., are we going to turn our backs on Canadians?

What happened to sovereignty? What happened to a government standing up for its own citizens? That has been lost with the government. Knowing that we should have an even greater concern when we see this other piece of legislation.

My colleague from Burnaby—Douglas was absolutely correct. The government cannot be trusted. The bill cannot be trusted. There will be no oversight. We will have more problems along the way. I do not want to see any Canadians harassed, not any one of them, over this type of action as we fight terrorism because that is not the answer.

*Points of Order*

**Mr. Joe Comartin (Windsor—St. Clair, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I want my colleague from Churchill to comment in regard to the legislation that is being used abusively against the Pakistani community generally, and with the exception of one person who is from India, over the last couple of months. People were under simple suspicion, and even that is probably stretching it, that they may somehow be involved in terrorism.

They were incarcerated and not told what the accusations were against them because there were no accusations in effect. Simply, on the whim of some immigration officials, they were incarcerated. A number of them are still incarcerated.

It has produced a chill because the result of some of those positions taken by some of the officials has been that people have now applied to voluntarily leave the country even though they may have a number of other remedies available to them under our immigration laws and common law that would allow them to stay in the country. But because they have had this mud thrown at them, this smear done on their reputations that they might somehow be associated with terrorism, they have voluntarily offered to leave the country.

I wonder if my colleague could comment if that type of chill that has been created in the field of immigration now. Could it spill over into other areas because of Bill C-17?

• (1525)

**Mrs. Bev Desjarlais:** Mr. Speaker, absolutely, I do not think there is any question that will happen.

As a once proud nation that was there to stand up for people from throughout the world who were having their human rights violated, Canada opened its doors. That is why a good many of us are here today because our ancestors came over. This was a nation that opened its doors to people and said that they would be given a better life, that they would not have to live under regimes that did not allow a democratic process. Canada said it could do that for them because that is what the country was about.

Under the current government and Prime Minister, with those members and that caucus over there, they have turned the page in Canadian history.

My colleague from Mississauga South was commenting on the War Measures Act and how it was important to have that in place at one time. Whether or not we decide whether the War Measures Act was important, the bottom line is that the War Measures Act ended. It was only there for a crucial moment and at least it was gone.

The bill before us will be law forever. This will be a day-by-day, year-by-year, decade-by-decade War Measures Act imposed upon Canadians, and it is not acceptable.

Canada will lose its place in the world as being considered a democratic nation. We will hear numerous reports—they are guaranteed to be coming—of infringements on people, harassments, and being jailed without the right of access to lawyers and the democratic process. Is that what we want? Is that how we want to be seen in the world? I do not think so.

If we allow that to happen, then those terrorists who took an active part in the September 11 attack have succeeded. They have made us

no better as a nation than the countries and terrorists that were doing it, and that is the absolute reality of this.

\* \* \*

**POINTS OF ORDER**

BILL C-36—LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES OF CANADA ACT

**Mr. Paul Bonwick (Simcoe—Grey, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would ask for your indulgence for a couple of moments while I ask you to rule on a point of order arising out of debate this week on the third reading of Bill C-36.

I would ask the Speaker with all due respect to rule out of order the third reading of Bill C-36, based on the fact that it was brought forward to the House under what I believe to be false pretences.

On June 10 and June 12 of this year while we were debating at committee Bill C-36, better known as the library and archives act, several members of the committee took exception to certain provisions that were included, namely provisions that touched on the Copyright Act. It was more of an omnibus piece of legislation rather than simply the library and archives act.

Based on an agreement with members of the opposition and myself, we were informed that those provisions with respect to the Copyright Act would be removed and that we would simply be voting on and dealing with the library and archives act. That agreement was made on June 12. The committee was reconvened by the chairperson on June 17, at which point the chairperson said “We have before us an amendment to clause 26, which is the copyright section, which has been presented by the parliamentary secretary acting for the government”.

The parliamentary secretary clearly stated on June 17:

Mr. Chairman, I was involved in all of the discussions of this committee. One of the reasons why we decided that we would remove them is, as you remember, the outburst of our Alliance colleagues who, at one point, accused us of turning this bill into an omnibus bill. They were very uncomfortable with us including these sections. So in an attempt to come up with a consensus, with the agreement of the department, I more or less gave my word to the committee members who are not here today that these clauses would be removed.

The parliamentary secretary made that commitment to our committee, the permanent members of the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage. With that word we went back to our ridings once the House rose for the summer.

The chair on June 17 called the committee back and asked it to vote clause by clause on Bill C-36, the library and archives act. After great debate it was decided, with the support of the parliamentary secretary and with the support of the chairperson, that they would allow those to remain in, regardless of the fact that the promise had clearly been made and was read into the record on the previous sitting day.

Mr. Speaker, I would suggest that you rule to disqualify this particular piece of legislation as it stands right now and refer it back to committee. Let the committee do the job that it is charged to do. Let us fulfill our responsibilities as members of Parliament and have a good, frank, open discussion about this and do not allow either the department or the minister to bring this bill forward under these kinds of pretences.

*Points of Order*

• (1530)

**Mr. Jim Abbott (Kootenay—Columbia, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, in order to be brief, I would refer you to *Hansard* from yesterday where there was a very full debate. All of the details that have just been raised by my colleague are verified in that debate.

What we get to is the fact that we live in a very large country. From my constituency, with the airplane connections themselves, it takes a minimum of seven hours to get here. I know that my colleague from northern Ontario is in the same boat and probably requires almost the same number of hours to get here. Therefore there has to be goodwill among parliamentarians. That goodwill is based on the word of a parliamentary secretary, the word of a House leader, the word of a whip, the word of a minister.

In this particular instance there was a very clear and explicit understanding on my part, having engaged in a personal conversation with the parliamentary secretary. I can also report on behalf of my colleague from Fraser Valley, who is responsible for this bill for my party, that there was an absolutely crystal clear understanding on his part that the clauses that we found offensive were going to be removed at committee.

As a result of that undertaking, there was the meeting that occurred on June 17, which, Mr. Speaker, I know you will recall was after the House rose. People came to that committee. Our understanding was that this commitment on behalf of the parliamentary secretary and the heritage minister was in place. Therefore, there was an opportunity for them to follow through on the commitment that had been undertaken.

I ask you, Mr. Speaker, to rule in favour of this point of order for the simple reason that in order for us as parliamentarians to do the people's business, there must be an order and the order must be on the basis of agreements that are made.

I do not think there is any question about the agreement being made. As everyone will see in *Hansard*, I challenged the parliamentary secretary yesterday. She did not challenge me on my assumption. We also have the actual *Hansard* from committee which the member opposite read into the record today.

I implore you, Mr. Speaker, in order to keep good order in this place, and for us to be able to function intelligently and well as parliamentarians and to do the people's business in an intelligent way, to rule in favour of the member's point of order.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Christiane Gagnon (Québec, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to lend my support to the request that was made today. An agreement had been reached to split the bill establishing the Library and Archives of Canada and amending the Copyright Act into two separate bills. This is what we are talking about today.

I agree with the member who made this proposal and I would like to see this matter referred to a committee so that we can go ahead with this bill, as agreed to by all members, before its introduction.

**Mr. Mauril Bélanger (Ottawa—Vanier, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would also like to make some comments. I was one of the members who attended the committee meeting on June 17, during the summer recess.

When I was first approached by the chair of the committee and by the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage, I told them I was concerned about the two clauses to amend the Copyright Act. I expressed concern because I believed that these proposed amendments should have been considered within a broader review of the Copyright Act. In fact, I understand that such a review is currently underway.

Both the chair of the committee—as he acknowledged during the June 17 meeting—and the parliamentary secretary assured me that the two clauses would be removed and set aside during the clause by clause consideration. Therefore, I volunteered to attend the June 17 meeting, knowing that some members would be in their riding for the summer recess.

I agreed to do so because I, along with each and every member of Parliament, support the merger of two of our institutions, the National Library and the Archives of Canada. I think this government bill deserves to be supported.

The two proposed amendments to the Copyright Act were polluting the bill, if I may say so, and the committee was trying to resolve the issue. When the meeting was held, the committee reneged on its commitment and that is when I voiced my opposition. Members can easily refer to the transcript of the meeting held by the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage on June 17. I firmly believe that an agreement can be changed at any time as long as it is done with the people who had agreed to it present, which was not the case on June 17.

• (1535)

[*English*]

**Mrs. Bev Desjarlais (Churchill, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I have just a short comment on the issue at hand. I use my colleague from across the way's terminology of legislative pollution. That legislative pollution has also become a pollution of integrity. It is integrity of word and of honour that we give to each other in the House of how things are going to proceed.

I dread the upcoming days in the House when that integrity is not there and we cannot trust each other's words even on the most simple of things. I think we have a very chaotic existence to look forward to should this be allowed to take place.

**The Speaker:** The Chair has listened very patiently to the remarks of the hon. members on this point.

[*Translation*]

I would like to thank all members who spoke on this point of order. I have considered the issue and it is really not an easy one for the Chair. Moreover, I have not heard the members talk about one single precedent on this issue. No doubt there are many in the history of this House.

[*English*]

I myself have served as assistant House leader in the House. I know that I have told members what we were going to do one day and had to change it later. Undertakings of this kind are often given and they are not always honoured.



*Government Orders***GOVERNMENT ORDERS***[Translation]***PUBLIC SAFETY ACT, 2002**

While hon. members may feel offended or upset or distressed or in some way concerned that something they thought was going to happen in one way did not, the fact is no one has suggested that the committee meeting on July 17 was in some way irregular, that there had not been due notice given of it, that there was not a quorum present for the transaction of business or anything like that. The committee report was duly tabled in the House. The bill was reported with or without amendments at that point. We have had concurrence at report stage on the bill and the bill is now before the House for debate at third reading.

I can only say that I do not believe it is for the Chair to seek to enforce undertakings given by members from one to the other. If the Chair was put in that position, I could only describe the situation as a complete nightmare. Imagine undertakings given between whips as to who will be present or not.

*[Translation]*

Imagine the promises made by the House leaders for dealing with the business of the House, the promises to have a bill passed at a given hour, or about having only voice votes, and not divisions. There are all kinds of things like this that happen in this House. It is not the Speaker's role to back up such promises.

● (1540)

*[English]*

I say to the hon. member for Simcoe—Grey who raised this point that I am not here to give procedural advice, far from it, but I note that no amendment has been moved at the third reading stage of the bill. The hon. member knows that at third reading, amendments are admissible that send the bill back to committee with instructions to amend the bill.

Therefore if the hon. member feels that there is some problem with a promise—

**Mr. Jim Abbott:** He can put it on the Order Paper.

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for Kootenay—Columbia is always very helpful but the member does not even need to put it on the Order Paper. He can stand up and move it without notice. It is one of the beauties of amendments at second or third reading.

I would not want to invite the hon. member to move an amendment. The government House leader would have my head for such a suggestion. However I certainly could say that it is something that is permissible under the rules and far preferable than having the Speaker put in a position of being told he has to enforce certain undertakings given in a committee, of all places, never mind in the House.

I decline to enforce the undertakings. I do not believe it is appropriate for the Speaker to intervene in this case. I can find no valid point of order in what the hon. member has raised and he can take my comments to heart or dispose of them as he sees fit under the circumstances.

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-17, An Act to amend certain Acts of Canada, and to enact measures for implementing the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention, in order to enhance public safety, be read the third time and passed.

**Mr. Paul Crête (Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup—Témiscouata—Les Basques, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to take part in the debate on third reading of Bill C-17, the Public Safety Act, 2002, sponsored by the Minister of Transport.

I think it is important, while we are in the heart of this debate, to remember the context in which the bill was introduced and the context in which we must determine its relevancy.

Let us remember that on September 11, 2001, as everyone knows, the United States was hit by deadly attacks. The response came rapidly and there was an unprecedented movement to fight terrorism. The Bloc Québécois was part of this movement. However, we thought about the matter and said that we must ensure that the measures taken reflect the necessary balance. The leader of the Bloc Québécois and member for Laurier—Sainte-Marie put it very eloquently, and I quote:

The response must reflect and respect our democratic values.

Consequently, we must ensure that we can get at the root of the problem of terrorism, by taking the necessary repressive and security measures, while respecting our democratic values.

One thing is clear, the federal government did not deliver. Members will remember Bill C-36, the first bill the government introduced in response to the terrorist attacks. At first, we all agreed that we should pass anti-terrorism legislation, but the bill did not strike the proper balance. In fact, we believed that Bill C-36 did not effectively balance liberty against greater security.

For instance, we wanted to add a sunset clause to the bill so that the legislation would cease to have effect after three years, unless otherwise stipulated by the House. What that would have meant is that at an exceptionally tragic time in our history, we would have passed an exceptionally crucial piece of legislation that would not apply forever. We asked for a review of the legislation three years after its implementation, in 2004 or 2005, in order to be able to determine that the legislation was no longer relevant and not required in the short term or to allow the House to renew the act if need be.

The Bloc asked for an annual review to be carried out by the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights, following the tabling of a report by an independent commissioner. Some of the provisions of the bill severely limited individual freedoms. Therefore, we wanted to ensure that the federal government was acting properly.

We did not get satisfaction on that point, but we were at least listened to, and the bill is to be reviewed in three years. There is, however, no sunset clause that will put an end to the bill.

### *Government Orders*

Following the same logic, the federal government reacted to the winds of panic, because adequate and well thought out measures could not be put in place. The federal government really failed in its anti-terrorism measures.

For example, the public security bill, known today as C-17, started life as C-42 and C-55. The first time it was introduced, the Bloc Québécois spoke out against it, feeling that some of its proposed measures went much too far and that they had only a very tenuous connection with terrorism.

The federal government took advantage of the terrorism crisis to try to solve other problems and to acquire powers it could use in certain situations. The crisis at that time did not justify this.

For example, the new power of ministers to adopt interim orders allowed too much leeway for arbitrary decisions. In Quebec we have already experienced situations in which the Cabinet took steps that left leeway for arbitrary decisions. Our collective consciousness has been marked permanently as a result.

There was the invoking of the War Measures Act in 1970, and the way the federal government interpreted its legislation in such an elastic way at that time. Citizens' right to freedom were limited in an unacceptable way, there were arbitrary arrests, and we most certainly do not want to find that same type of decision included in a bill.

There was one other measure that went much too far. The military security zones were very poorly defined in the bill and their implementation left the door wide open for all manner of abuses. That bill was replaced by Bill C-55, and now by C-17. Neither one nor the other, however, manage to strike the necessary balance.

Let us talk about the Bloc position on military interventions. As far as the war against terrorism is concerned, we supported the strikes against Afghanistan, but called for them to be made under the auspices of the United Nations Organization in order to lend the necessary credibility to them.

As for sending Canadian troops, we supported that, but called for them not to be sent until there was a debate and a vote in the House of Commons, so that elected representatives could make known their positions on such an important decision.

• (1545)

Finally, we are very critical of the behaviour of the American administration, particularly the use of cluster bombs and the creation of military courts to try terrorists.

When we look at the two anti-terrorism bills the federal government put forward, we cannot but see it has failed in the fight against terrorism. The proposed measures do not strike a fair balance between freedom and security and, worse yet, the government is attempting to justify taking exceptional measures against terrorism when some of those measures are neither necessary nor justifiable.

We oppose Bill C-17 mainly because we believe it is fundamentally a bad bill. We give a failing grade to the federal government in its fight against terrorism.

As a matter of fact, this bill is a new version of Bill C-55, which dealt with public security, which was itself a new version of Bill C-42. Originally, our criticism targeted military zones, the interim

orders I mentioned early, and the exchange of information from airline companies on passengers.

There again, the federal government was taking on a very broad mandate. In this respect, compared to the previous bills, the proposed amendments fall far short. The scope of the proposed provisions goes way beyond the fight against terrorism. They do not strike the right balance between security and privacy.

That is why we voted against the bill at second reading. In committee, we put forward a number of amendments and attempted to mitigate the problems created by the bill. Virtually every single one of our amendments was turned down.

For example, with regard to interim orders, the bill provides that they may be issued by various ministers without first checking that they are consistent with the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and its enabling statute.

We attempted to reinstate these initial checks but our amendments were rejected. For our sake and the sake of the balance we have been seeking since the very beginning, it is important that decisions made under interim orders respect the Charter of Rights and that advice be sought to make sure they do. That is not in the bill.

Under the latest version of the bill, interim orders should be tabled in Parliament within the first 15 sitting days after the order is issued. We find this to be excessive and tried to have the timeframe shortened from 15 to 5 days.

With respect to the powers of the RCMP and CSIS, it has become obvious in recent days that the RCMP's management of terrorism is far from transparent. Take for example the Canadian citizen who travelled to the United States and ended up in Syria, on the basis of recommendations from the RCMP according to U.S. government officials. This situation is forcing us to be very critical and to make sure that such behaviour will not be tolerated.

This bill includes provisions that confer sweeping powers on the Commissioner of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and the Director of the Canadian Security Intelligence Service with regard to passenger information compiled by the airlines.

We want to make the bill much tighter, to ensure there is a very tight net in place to prevent excesses. There is nothing in this bill in this regard.

We tried in vain to amend the bill to limit the powers to retain or use information collected as a result. We wanted to prohibit the use of this information to execute an arrest warrant.

We also wanted to ensure that the information collected would be destroyed within 24 hours after the aircraft carrying the passengers on whom information had been collected had landed, except if such information was reasonably necessary for transportation security purposes or an investigation related to national security.

In this bill, the timeframe within which such information must be destroyed remains seven days, which we still feel is inappropriate.

We in the Bloc Québécois also tried to establish a mechanism to ensure that the Privacy Commissioner receives a copy of the reasons for retaining certain information. We wanted to have a watchdog of sorts with respect to privacy, to counterbalance the increased powers of the RCMP. Again, the government refused.

• (1550)

Thus, with respect to Bill C-17 now before us, which was unacceptable at the beginning because it did not strike the right balance, even after examining the amendments we do not find that balance.

For example, we attempted to make a number of changes in the sections concerning the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act, the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention Implementation Act, and the Proceeds of Crime (Money Laundering) Act, by suggesting amendments or voting against certain clauses. We attempted to make these changes in response to the concerns of various groups who appeared before the committee, but they were voted down.

The House will understand that we are clearly opposed to this bill. Beginning with the first version of this bill, we were opposed to a number of provisions that are still found in this one. Even though the Bloc had some success with respect to the first version, particularly in the delineation of military zones, this bill has not been sufficiently improved that we could vote in favour of it.

I was speaking of the concept of military security zones. It has completely disappeared from the bill. This is a sensible improvement that pleases us; we think it is essential. For example, the provision concerning the establishment of zones by order in council appears much more reasonable than in the previous version. We must ensure that no zones are created in Quebec without the consent of the Government of Quebec.

Remember that the initial bill would have made it possible that, in Quebec City, the Citadel, the Armoury and even the Quebec National Assembly could be included within the military zone. When we look at the past, the October crisis and the legitimacy of the Quebec National Assembly, it was completely unacceptable. We succeeded in getting it removed from the bill, and we are very happy about that. We did our job well, and Quebecers can be proud of the results we obtained.

As for the interim orders, the bill still contains provisions that would allow various ministers to make such orders. Some minimal changes have been made requiring the tabling in Parliament within 15 days and the reduction from 45 to 14 days of the period during which the order would be in force without cabinet approval. But 14 days can still be a very long time, particularly when decisions are made. It can be realized afterwards that some people have felt for years the consequences of a decision taken further to an error in

### *Routine Proceedings*

judgment. The way cabinet works, we certainly have to protect ourselves from this type of decisions.

We have seen it before and we still see it, particularly with national defence. It has been said for years that before going out to buy material, we should first decide what kind of armed forces we want to have, what the mandate would be and what kind of results we are expecting. Without clear policies, if an interim order is made by a minister and errors occur, the period during which the order would be in force without cabinet approval should be much shorter than what is provided for in the act.

What is worse, of course, is the fact that there is no prior assessment to ensure that—

**The Deputy Speaker:** I am sorry to interrupt the member for Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup—Témiscouata—Les Basques. The government House leader, on a point of order.

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## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

• (1555)

[*Translation*]

### COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

#### NON-MEDICAL USE OF DRUGS

**Hon. Don Boudria (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, first, I would like to apologize to the hon. member.

The House leaders have come to an agreement, and I believe you will find unanimous consent for the following motion:

[*English*]

That the Special Committee on the Non-medical Use of Drugs be reappointed to consider, when the House so orders, Bill C-38, an act to amend the Contraventions Act and the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act;

That the committee shall have all the powers granted to standing committees by Standing Order 108;

That all evidence adduced by the Special Committee on the Non-Medical Use of Drugs in the present and previous sessions be referred to the said committee;

That the members of the following committee be—

—and here, Mr. Speaker, with your permission, I will name the members—

—Carole-Marie Allard, Mauril Bélanger, Dominic LeBlanc, Derek Lee, Hon. Hedy Fry, Gilbert Barrette, Paddy Torsney, Randy White, Kevin Sorenson, Richard Marceau, Réal Menard, Libby Davies and Inky Mark; and

That the Clerk be authorized to make any changes to the Order Paper made necessary by this order.

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

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

*Government Orders*

(Motion agreed to)

**GOVERNMENT ORDERS***[Translation]***PUBLIC SAFETY, 2002**

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-17, an act to amend certain Acts of Canada, and to enact measures for implementing the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention, in order to enhance public safety, be read the third time and passed.

**Mr. Paul Crête (Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup—Témiscouata—Les Basques, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I was interrupted by the government House leader for a good reason, for a motion to allow a House committee to do its work. Before that, I was explaining why the Bloc Québécois will vote against Bill C-17 on third reading. We think that this piece of legislation does not always strike the right balance between the means to ensure public safety against terrorism, and respect for human rights. Personally, I think the worst abuse of rights that could happen and one that we should not condone concerns the disclosure of information.

On May 6, the Privacy Commissioner published a letter detailing his concerns with Bill C-55—which existed prior to Bill C-17—and information obtained by the RCMP and CSIS. He expressed reservations about provisions allowing the RCMP to use personal information on air travellers to search for individuals subject to an outstanding warrant for any offence punishable by imprisonment of five years or more and, second, allowing CSIS and the RCMP to retain passenger information in search of suspicious travel patterns.

It would appear that the government tried to tighten these provisions and failed. In fact, although the RCMP can no longer collect information to search for an individual subject to a warrant, it can still provide a peace officer with information obtained under Bill C-17 if it has reason to believe that such information is needed to execute a warrant.

An example of this is a Canadian citizen who ended up in Syria due to a broad and possibly erroneous interpretation of that section, or that type of procedure. That is an example of the kind of abuse that can result. To this end, the federal government should think about referring this to committee again—as we just sought to do with another bill—to find ways to further tighten these provisions to ensure there will be no abuse.

The RCMP decides when a situation threatens transportation safety, thereby allowing it to request passenger lists from airlines. This provision has no control mechanisms. The RCMP has carte blanche. Furthermore, once it has obtained information, there is nothing to prevent it from holding on to that information, as long as the reasons are recorded.

There is no mention of what kind of reasons would be valid. Perhaps being a frequent traveller, for example, would be reason enough. So, the RCMP could decide to retain this information. Perhaps, in some way, frequent flyers will be suspected of violating that section.

Therefore, it is not really serious enough. There is some tightening up to be done. These provisions need to be worked on some more to achieve the right balance.

We also heard that the government has tightened up the definition of warrant. In the previous version, it could be an outstanding warrant for any offence punishable under federal law by imprisonment for five years or more. Now the definition stipulates that there will be a regulation stipulating exactly what crimes are involved.

According to the commissioner, the seven-day period for which the RCMP and CSIS can retain information is excessive and a 48-hour period would be sufficient. The fact that this information can be retained indefinitely by the RCMP and CSIS as a security measure is cause for concern. Limits have to be set. Neither of the changes the Privacy Commissioner proposed has been included. In November 2002, the commissioner issued a new press release in which he expressed his concerns about this situation.

We in the Bloc Québécois believe that the amendments introduced by the government in connection with the powers of the RCMP and CSIS to gather information on air passengers are still far too broad. Although the proposed amendments may appear to be plugging some of the loopholes, the problems raised by the Privacy Commissioner remain. In that regard, the bill is certainly not good enough.

A little over two years have gone by since the events of September 11, 2001. We obviously went through very difficult times in the days and months following these events. Today, as we are debating this bill, we should be even more aware of the need to strike the right balance between the right to privacy and the right to security so as to avoid any abuse on either side and to have the necessary tools to obtain the desired results.

● (1600)

In this case, since the government was really improvising—the same bill was introduced three times—strong representations were required by the Bloc Québécois to eliminate the most unacceptable parts of this bill. We had to show beyond a shadow of a doubt that there has been intolerable abuse in a democratic society. We obtained a certain number of improvements.

The current version of the bill is still inadequate and does not strike the balance we think it should. That is why the Bloc Québécois will vote against this bill, in the hope that the government will allow it to be sent back to committee, or think twice before implementing it.

I am convinced that within five years, abuses will have been committed in practical applications, particularly by the police. And people will say that they never would have thought such a bill could lead to such abuses.

*Government Orders*

In the Bloc Québécois, we demonstrated that it was most certainly possible. We hope the government is listening to the arguments that have been presented so that the bill, which still needs a lot of improvement, is studied again.

It is unfortunate that the government decided to move a time allocation motion, which limits debate on this issue. It is odd that the time allowed for debating a bill on human rights would be limited. If we heard about such a thing happening in other countries, we would say that they have a democratic deficit.

Indeed, Canada has a major democratic deficit, with the future prime minister convening the Liberal caucus this evening before the official caucus meeting tomorrow. There is something unacceptable about that for citizens.

We also realize that many bills move forward even though they are not perfect, or are not what they should be, because there are no clear guidelines in this government.

For all these reasons, I hope that, despite its time allocation motion, the government will reconsider its decision to have us vote on a bill when several of its provisions are unacceptable and fail to protect human rights.

**Mr. Odina Desrochers (Lotbinière—L'Érable, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, naturally I agree with my colleague and I think this important speech brings us back to reality; we are always looking for the perfect balance between security and respect for human rights.

Could my colleague summarize the main irritants which explain why the Bloc Québécois must, once again, vote against this bill?

**Mr. Paul Crête:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question.

At the beginning, we set out the principles by which we would determine the appropriate balance between the fight against terrorism and the protection of individual rights.

We said that those principles should ensure that nobody would be unduly penalized, that no organization such as the RCMP or CSIS, with their dubious past in the management of such issues, would be given too much power, and that the proper safety net would be put in place to protect us from excesses.

The provisions on military zones were among the main elements that had to be changed. That was a terrible flaw that we had to rectify and did.

In the present bill, one of the key points is that we allow the RCMP and CSIS to keep data on air travellers for several days. That provision means that we question the honesty of people without any formal proof. Those are things that could be harmful right now or later on.

For example, a note might be left indefinitely in an individual's file, as long as a justification is given. But there is nothing to say that, in three months, six months or a year, someone will not prevent this person from travelling or from leaving the country because of this kind of note that has nothing to do with a criminal judgment or a decision that legally penalizes and finds this person guilty.

It is because of this type of situation that we say that the bill should be amended, particularly because of several changes that we

asked for in the Immigration Act, the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention Implementation Act, and the Proceeds of Crime (Money Laundering) Act. These are all elements that make this bill too flawed to be passed today. The government must correct this bill once again.

It has already done so twice and it has recognized that it has, in the past, tabled bills that were ill defined and vague. We know that we are not dealing with an urgent situation requiring that we face a terrorist attack tomorrow.

However, we will have bills that will give us the tools necessary to respond. More than ever, I believe that Canadians expect the bills that are passed to adequately protect human rights. Passing this bill would call that into question.

● (1605)

[English]

**Mr. Scott Brison (Kings—Hants, PC):** Mr. Speaker, it is with pleasure that I rise today to speak on Bill C-17, the public safety act.

First, nobody in the House argues with the need for us to be vigilant in protecting Canadians against terrorism and in playing a meaningful role, working internationally and through multinational forces, in fighting the scourge of terrorism that was brought home to us on September 11.

Clearly, there are many things we can do both domestically and through continental security, in cooperation with the U.S., to improve protection against terrorism for Canadians. These can include a greater focus on parameter security, more adequate funding for the RCMP, ports police and funding for the Canadian Coast Guard.

Internationally, we need to invest in our Canadian military. We need to refocus our efforts on strengthening the hard power side of our foreign policy and our ability in a meaningful way to provide the kinds of cooperation to our military partners that is necessary. That means, for instance, having a well equipped Canadian armed forces that can provide the type of light, mobile and lethal military service that is required.

I happen to agree with a lot of what has been written in recent months by retired Major-General Lewis MacKenzie on not just reinvesting in our Canadian military but actually reforming it to reflect the realities of a post-cold war environment and providing the kind of Canadian military that can dovetail effectively in a multilateral coalition in fighting the war against terrorism.

All these changes can occur and Canada can strengthen its role in fighting terrorism domestically and internationally without this legislation.

*Government Orders*

The federal government has failed to demonstrate to Canadians why the legislation, which does represent an attack on civil liberties of Canadians, is required when we already have adequate legislation on the books in the form of the Emergencies Act.

Further, this is not a government that has maintained an adequate commitment to the RCMP, the Canadian military or to protecting the sanctity of our parameter. These are all issues and policies that can be addressed in a meaningful way without in any way, shape or form reducing or attacking Canadian civil liberties.

We would propose that the government focus on those sorts of meaningful initiatives, work with the U.S. and develop a common approach to parameter security to take some of the pressure off the 49th parallel security and to help again restore a seamless movement of people and goods between the two countries.

Currently in post-September 11 there has been a significant growth in non-tariff trade barriers between the two countries and a lot of that has emanated from legitimate U.S. concerns about the porosity of Canada's parameter and the lax approach of our government to issues of security on a wide range of fronts.

We ought to work to develop a common approach to parameter security to enable us to have a more seamless movement of people and goods between the two countries and to move toward a checked once policy whereby a shipment or container load of goods that comes into Halifax, or Vancouver, or San Francisco or Baltimore is checked once, resealed and free to move within the economic space of Canada and the United States. That could be achieved quite easily if the government focused on that.

That kind of approach, focusing on defending the sanctity of our parameter, would do more to protect Canadians against terrorism and would in fact keep up our end of the deal in terms of working with our partners, in this case the United States, and a multilateral coalition fighting terrorism around the world.

• (1610)

If we were to properly invest in our military and Coast Guard, restore ports police, improve funding for the RCMP, improve perimeter security and invest significantly in airline security, as the government has moved partially in this regard, that would accomplish a great deal on behalf of Canadians in terms of the war against terrorism.

We can do a lot to protect the security of Canadians without in any way diminishing or threatening to diminish their civil liberties. As such, we have great concerns, as many members on the opposite side of the House have expressed, about this legislation and we do not support it. There are opportunities for the government to do a lot and take significant and important steps to fight terrorism and protect Canadians without this legislation.

We would urge the government to make those investments and demonstrate that will to seriously address the issue of security and the fight against terrorism without resorting to measures as draconian as Bill C-17.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Odina Desrochers (Lotbinière—L'Érable, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I too rise to speak to the important matter of Bill C-17.

As you know, I will start by blaming the Liberal government once again for this gag order which limits the time allotted to parliamentarians to discuss such a crucial and important issue.

The legislative agenda has been rather thin lately in this parliament. There have been persistent rumours that the current session could end early due to the upcoming change in leadership on the other side, in other words the current Prime Minister will have to step down in favour of the member for LaSalle—Émard.

It would appear as a result that the government wants to push ahead with several bills and move the agenda faster. After unduly delaying bills and regulations, it now wants to make up for lost time. Attempting to make up for lost time by ramming through a bill as important as Bill C-17 is going a bit too far.

I would like to share an experience I had recently in Taiwan at a world convention in Taipei attended by about 23 countries. The conference was entitled "Democratic Pacific Assembly". Those 23 countries tackled the fundamental issue of security and freedom of speech.

The motions that were unanimously passed during this important meeting said that the balance between freedom and security had to be maintained and that the unfortunate events of September 2001, that are starting to be distorted, should not serve as an excuse for legislation muzzling hard won freedom of speech.

Unfortunately, Ottawa does not seem to want to respect this fundamental balance between freedom and security. We must say yes to security, but not at the expense of our rights and freedoms.

We have seen what has been happening in the United States over the past two years. Freedom of speech has virtually been eliminated from the airwaves, especially on television; we saw the Bush administration trying to take over the media, use propaganda and justify its behaviour. We are all aware of the situation in which the U.S. administration and its president, Mr. George Bush, now find themselves, especially with their involvement in the war in Iraq. Again, in the United States, freedom of speech has been severely curtailed. Unfortunately the media capitalized on a show. Today, the show is over but the current president and his great thinkers are still trying to justify his actions by using the word terrorism.

With such a formidable neighbour, the Canadian government must be wary of adopting some of the provisions found in Bill C-17. If our neighbours south of the border go too far and get carried away on the issue of terrorism, we are not out of the woods.

As we all know, parliamentarians have been considering this important piece of legislation for two years now. Bills C-36, C-42, C-55 and C-17 were all brought before the House. Unfortunately, whatever the number of the bill is, it still contains the same deficiencies.

Let us review the history of this bill. The first bill introduced in response to the terrorist attacks was Bill C-36. Although we supported at first the need to pass anti-terrorism legislation, we thought that the federal government's proposal did not strike the proper balance.

*Government Orders*

•(1615)

At the time, the Bloc Québécois thought that Bill C-36 did not effectively balance freedom with security issues. When Bill C-36 was first introduced, the attacks and the terrorist threat were at an all-time high and had created an exceptional climate. But since then, a lot of water has gone under the bridge.

I remember taking part in the debate on Bill C-36. I warned the government about the three-year limit. Things were changing so fast that we thought we could not pass legislation on such a crucial issue and maintain it for three years without reviewing and adjusting it.

If, at some point, the Canadian government needs certain tools to address a particular situation, we can provide these tools. However, the situation may change, and this is why we would like the legislation to be reviewed and reassessed every twelve months to see if it meets the expectations of the public and our security needs.

Members will recall that the Bloc Québécois asked for a sunset clause to be added to this bill so that it would cease to be in effect after three years, unless the House decided otherwise. Parliamentarians always have the power to amend an act if the situation warrants. However, we do not know what the future holds for us. We are all trying to stamp out terrorism. We believe that laudable efforts have been made so far, and this is why we think that a piece of legislation as crucial and important as the one before us today must be reviewed periodically.

Regarding this particular piece of legislation, we also asked that it be reviewed automatically each year by the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights, which would be the same thing. Every year, it would be referred to the committee for review. This means that members from all political parties gathered around a table would have a good look at it and would be able to make recommendations in light of the current context. Again, our suggestion was rejected.

Furthermore, it was also said regarding this bill that the Minister of Justice could withhold information normally accessible under the Access to Information Act, without any safeguard provided. This is also very dangerous. The bill will be reviewed only in three years' time. I have talked about this before. The Minister of National Defence will be able to intercept international communications simply by sending a written request to the Centre. He will not even need a judge's authorization.

In this regard, allow me to say that I am very concerned, especially after the events of August 14 and 15 when a power failure hit Ontario and the southeastern United States. We know that the person who was supposed to have all the information and to reassure the public, the Minister of National Defence, made a statement. All he did was further confuse matters. The sources were contradictory. Just imagine if the present Minister of National Defence were to intercept international communications. How could we take him seriously when he interpreted this information and particularly when he explained what was really happening in a given situation?

Continuing with the history of the public security bill, there was first C-42, then Bill C-55 and now Bill C-17. One thing is clear. The weaknesses that were part of the initial bill are still present in Bill C-17 and I will explain why.

Claiming to be trying to further improve security, the government introduced Bill C-42 on public safety.

•(1620)

As soon as the bill was tabled, our party stated its opposition once more, finding that some of the proposed measures went much too far, and that their link to terrorism was rather tenuous. The government must not be given an opportunity to abuse the situation.

The collective memory of Quebeckers has not faded away. We remember very clearly what happened during the October crisis in 1970. We all must remember it, because if we give police and military powers to this government, we know they may be abused. Consequently, when faced with such situations, the collective memory of Quebeckers reminds us of the sad events of October 1970. Today, in 2003, I want to reintroduce them into the debate because one never knows what may happen when a context changes.

In my opinion, that is the reason this bill tends to draw links—often very tenuous ones—with terrorism. I will return to the whole issue of the powers the bill would give to the RCMP and CSIS.

Bill C-55 was then replaced by Bill C-17, which is now before us. Unfortunately, these two bills do not come any closer to achieving the necessary balance. And yet that is the fundamental principle and we mention it constantly in these debates. The position of the Bloc Québécois is to strike a fair balance between liberty and security at all times, and especially to prevent possible abuses by the Canadian federal government.

We have had some victories along the way during the debates to come up with new legislation. In Bill C-17, we see that the controlled access military zones that were mentioned in Bill C-42 have been withdrawn. That was a considerable victory for the Bloc Québécois and that is why we keep on hammering away with these fundamental principles.

As I said earlier, it is terrible that the government is using a closure motion once again to prevent us from exercising our rights, presenting our point of view, and trying to eventually convince the Liberal government of the flaws in Bill C-17.

I would also like to address the powers that will be conferred upon the RCMP and CSIS. We are aware of the case of Maher Arar—on which my colleague from Mercier has been asking questions earlier. This Canadian was apprehended by the Americans when in the United States and was subsequently returned to his former country.

Judging from the RCMP's behaviour, if it had more power given to it, this would lead to almost an automatic connection between the RCMP and the Americans. This lays open to question the rights of citizens, of the people of Canada and Quebec.

So those are the powers. The bill includes provisions which confer extended powers on RCMP commissioners as well as the director of CSIS, in connection with the gathering of information on air passengers from the airlines.

*Government Orders*

The more we travel, the more we will be under surveillance. That is what this means. The more often we take a plane, the more the RCMP will interfere in our business. The more often we visit countries likely to have links with countries that have links to terrorists, the more likely the RCMP is to interfere in our business. It is unacceptable that so much power is being given to the RCMP, particularly when we have seen how it acted in this matter, which is getting so much media coverage and attention in the House.

•(1625)

We tried to amend this bill so as to limit the powers relating to retention and use of the information gathered in this way. We often hear reference to someone “flagged by the RCMP”. What does that mean? It means that the RCMP collects information on such individuals, based on the assumption of a link with terrorism. This information is on file with the RCMP and can be used at any time in order to violate the freedom of members of the public. It is really dangerous to give so much power to the RCMP with Bill C-17.

We also wanted to ensure that the information gathered would be destroyed within 24 hours of landing unless there were any suspicions about the passenger. What point is there in keeping information? But no, the time limit will be seven days. In other words, during those seven days the authorities are in possession of information on an individual which can lead to digging deeper into that person's life, far more than to just find out about his past, his background, when he takes a plane.

The current Bill C-17 includes such abuse, and these are fundamental democratic issues. All the government is doing is imposing Bill C-17 on us. It is forcing the bill on us and gagging us so we keep quiet. If this is democracy, we have a real problem.

I want to say once again that all the members of the Bloc Québécois oppose this bill. We opposed various provisions in the initial version that are still found in this bill, a few of which I mentioned. Despite all the efforts to mitigate the problematic provisions, we continue to find them unacceptable.

I will repeat once again that it is time for the government to backtrack, and not adopt this bill this afternoon, during the vote to be held shortly. This is a serious situation given the bill's failure to ensure a balance between freedom and security. This is the most important point. If we have to give up rights and freedoms for improved security, why did we fight for them in the first place? In many countries, people are still fighting for freedom of expression.

I am reminded of my trip to Taiwan. In the neighbouring country, the People's Republic of China, there is no such thing as freedom of expression and respect for human rights. Yet we live in an age where information circulates freely. Furthermore, the Americans may promote free speech, but free speech that is controlled and planned by the Cabinet of the United States President, George Bush.

Given all these situations, Bill C-17 must include the desired amendments to maintain a balance between freedom and security so that Quebecers and Canadians can live freely in the years to come.

•(1630)

**The Deputy Speaker:** Before we get into questions and comments, it is my duty, pursuant to Standing Order 38, to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of

adjournment are as follows: the hon. member for Peterborough, Agriculture; the hon. member for Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, The Environment.

**Mr. Roger Gaudet (Berthier—Montcalm, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his remarks on Bill C-17. I have a brief question for him.

He talked repeatedly about the importance of striking a balance between freedom and security. What impact does he think Bill C-17 introduced today by the Liberal government will have on freedom of speech?

•(1635)

**Mr. Odina Desrochers:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question.

As I have said several times, what I worry the most about is that this bill will apply for three years. If freedom is restricted for three years, who knows what can happen. I am also worried about the considerable power the RCMP will have concerning relations that could exist between people suspected of being members of terrorist groups.

I think this issue is fundamental. We cannot give up freedom of speech and hard won democratic rights for the sake of a bill we have been debating for two years. Just imagine what the Americans and people in other countries think. They have already developed and passed legislation. In the meantime, we are still working on this bill. This is the last stage of a bill that is flawed and dangerous for freedom of speech.

I think the Liberal government should backtrack, send the bill back to committee, take the time to correct the flaws in the bill, and give us a piece of legislation that will strike a fair balance between freedom and security.

**Ms. Francine Lalonde (Mercier, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I will start by saying that I will be sharing my time with the hon. member for Terrebonne—Blainville.

Before getting into Bill C-17, I want to commend the excellent work done by our critic, the hon. member for Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel, who has expended considerable talent and unbounded energy to uphold the principles of the Bloc Québécois. We were in favour of fighting terrorism, but not at the cost of ignoring or shoving under the carpet the rights and freedoms of Quebecers and Canadians.

It is interesting to note that immediately following September 11, the Bloc Québécois offered its cooperation. On the principle, the vast majority of Quebecers agreed that terrorism had to be fought, but not at any cost. Otherwise, the terrorists would have won, since we would ourselves have curtailed the principles and rights and freedoms of our democracy.



*Government Orders*

That is why, when the initial bill, Bill C-36, the anti-terrorism bill, was introduced, we stressed that this balance between the fight against terrorism and respect for rights and freedom was lacking. That is why we started by proposing several amendments.

We asked the government to include a sunset clause. We felt that the legislation was too rough, too tough in certain areas. This was understandable, given that the events had just taken place, but we believed that in time, it would be desirable that the legislation be reviewed because many of the provisions would no longer be necessary. We were ignored and we expressed our opposition to the bill.

This is the third version of the second major piece of legislation arising from the events of September 11: Bill C-17. First, there was Bill C-42, and then Bill-55, and now, when it is unclear how much longer the House will be sitting because of the political context, Bill C-17. We have before us a bill which, it must be noted, is an improvement in a number of regards on Bill C-42 and Bill C-55.

To us, these are gains which can be described as a partial yet major victory that everyone will be very pleased with. I would be remiss not to mention that one of the main irritants in Bill C-55 was the ability the government was giving itself to designate controlled access military zones. There have been two versions, but initially the government gave itself the power to declare that any zone, anywhere in the country, was a military zone under the complete control of the government, without any protection for rights.

We said that this made no sense whatsoever. Even at the time of the War Measures Act, it was Quebec's attorney general who was supposed to ask that the federal government get involved. It is absolutely unacceptable that the federal government should decide on its own initiative to establish these zones anywhere, without being asked to do so by the attorney general of the province concerned. This could have led to all kinds of abuses.

•(1640)

We said no and we protested strongly. Finally, the government heard us and we now know that orders in council be will made if need be. We will monitor each of these orders, but the general measure is risky and thus put aside. This is for the better.

Another one of the major provisions we strongly opposed was the exchange of information. Part of the exchange of information provided for in the original bill affected travellers. However, it was finally recognized that the need for this came from the demands of the United States concerning aircraft flying over its territory.

With a lot of debating, we finally got—and this too was a given—specific legislation on this issue, with a number of limited powers, although some are still too broad, but at least there are limitations.

Let me say that, if controlled access military zones have totally disappeared from Bill C-17, we find ourselves in the reverse situation on the issue of exchange of information, that is, the transfer of information to the United States, which was limited to some extent, will now be broadened.

Indeed, under Bill C-17, those who travel by plane must provide more information than had been required by the Americans. This

information is available to the RCMP and CSIS, and they both reserve the right not to destroy it. We asked for a 24-hour timeframe.

We think that it is utterly unacceptable, since it means that some people will be followed, even though there are no longer on a plane, because we want to know how they get from one airport to another.

Again, this applies only to people travelling by plane. However, I think that we must reaffirm the right of law abiding citizens to leave the country without having their every move scrutinized, as it would be in a police state.

We are also against the interim orders, which will allow ten ministers to make decisions regardless of their compliance with fundamental legislation. They have 15 days to do this. It seems to us that the verification process could be done before that. We proposed flexible solutions for that, but they were rejected. It makes no sense to us.

Our concerns with Bill C-55 and Bill C-42 were heard, and it seems to me that everybody benefited from that. Our requests must also be heard. Unfortunately, we are disappointed that the amendments that we proposed in committee were not accepted. Therefore, we will have to vote against this bill.

We believe that it would have been possible not to sacrifice our rights and freedoms. The Privacy Commissioner, who was criticized in other circumstances, spoke out against this situation.

•(1645)

Since he was so close to the Liberal government, we can use what he said when he expressed serious concerns about the provisions dealing with the sharing of information.

We will vote against this bill. We would have preferred to do otherwise, but it is impossible in the circumstances.

**Ms. Diane Bourgeois (Terrebonne—Blainville, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak today on Bill C-17. It is quite a coincidence, since I am currently renewing my home insurance policy and on the issue of liability insurance, my contract stipulates:

Terrorism: an ideologically motivated unlawful act or acts, including but not limited to the use of violence or force or threat of violence or force, committed by or on behalf of any group(s), organization(s) or government(s) for the purpose of influencing any government and/or instilling fear in the public—

It also points out that the policy does not provide coverage for:

—any loss or damage caused directly or indirectly, in whole or in part, by terrorism or by any activity or decision of a government agency... to prevent, respond, or terminate terrorism.

*Government Orders*

So, this is not covered by the insurance policy. Later on, I will link all of this to my speech on the public safety bill now before the House. Following the attacks on September 11, 2001, people were understandably afraid. However, I think that some people want to exaggerate the attacks or the threats of terrorism. The government as well as other groups and businesspeople are using the events of September 11, 2001 to scare people. They want the public to remain nervous and distraught. Legislation like Bill C-17, the Public Safety Act, 2002, can only instill more fear in people. That is not showing them much respect.

As I said earlier, and as everyone knows, the United States was hit by deadly attacks on September 11, 2001. The response came rapidly and there was an unprecedented movement to mobilize in the fight against terrorism.

The Bloc Québécois joined this immense mobilization. We condemned the attacks and, in the hours that followed, we offered our cooperation to the federal government with respect to emergency measures for dealing with the situation. But at the time, we had asked—and that has remained our position for all the bills that have been presented—that there be a fair balance between freedom and security.

Unfortunately, the federal government has failed, and the measures it has proposed have not maintained this balance. They go even further in my view; they scare people. That is particularly true when it comes to bills such as Bill C-17, which we are debating today.

The first bill presented in response to the terrorist attacks was Bill C-36. We agreed to adopt an antiterrorism bill, but Bill C-36 did not strike the right balance between freedom and security, something we are still looking for.

The terrorist attacks and threats reached an exceptional level and created an exceptional context. This happened in a certain country, at a given time, during a given period. That does not mean there will not be any more, that there will be attacks here in Canada or in Quebec.

• (1650)

Of course, acts of terrorism can happen every day. Nonetheless, there have not been very many here over the past three decades, so why frighten people and hold them hostage?

I repeat, Bill C-36 was an exceptional measure in response to an exceptional situation. That is why the Bloc Québécois asked the government to include the sunset clause my colleague was talking about earlier, for the legislation to cease to be in effect after three years unless the House decided otherwise.

The Bloc Québécois asked for an automatic review every year, by the Standing Committee on Justice, or after the tabling of a report by an independent commissioner, to remove the pressure that people feel and perhaps prevent escalation or trade-offs. Unfortunately, these amendments were rejected. There are other problematic elements, but those are the main ones.

Then came Bills C-42 and C-55 and the current version, Bill C-17; the public safety bill that now before the House.

Claiming to be trying to further improve security, the government then introduced Bill C-42 on public safety. From the beginning, the Bloc Québécois was against this bill, because some of the proposed measures really went too far and the connection with terrorism was rather tenuous. For example, the new power being given to ministers regarding interim orders was way too arbitrary. As for the military security zones, they were ill defined and their implementation left the door wide open to much abuse.

This bill was then replaced by Bill C-55 and later on by the bill before us today. Unfortunately, these two bills did not manage to maintain the necessary balance either.

Considering the two bills that the federal government introduced on terrorism, we have to recognize that the government has failed in its fight against terrorism. The proposed measures fail to maintain a fair balance between freedom and security. And what is worse, the government is trying to justify the extraordinary measures by the fight against terrorism, while some of those measures are neither necessary nor justifiable. We need only think about the use that can be made of the information obtained under Bill C-17, with respect to people for whom a warrant has been issued. If we oppose Bill C-17, it is mainly because we strongly believe that it is a bad bill, but it is also because we recognize that the government's behaviour in the fight against terrorism is a failure.

We voted against this bill at second reading. We will do it again this time, as we still oppose this bill. From the beginning, we have opposed many of the provisions that are still in the bill before us, despite the fact that we tried to move amendments and made many efforts to understand and refine the first bill.

Despite all the efforts that we made to soften the impact of the problematic clauses, these clauses remain unacceptable for the Bloc Québécois and its members.

• (1655)

**Mr. Odina Desrochers (Lotbinière—L'Érable, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I was glad to hear my colleague's remarks, which support completely the position of the Bloc Québécois. This fight has now been going on for two years.

She mentioned that the present bill has the same flaws we identified in the two previous bills, as we said today.

For the information of the hon. members opposite, I would like my colleague to mention a few points that she would have liked to amend in Bill C-17, which will be adopted in a few minutes, unfortunately.

**Ms. Diane Bourgeois:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague, the member for Lotbinière—L'Érable, for this question. He is right, I did not mention that point during my speech.

The Bloc Québécois is still concerned, for example, about the provisions on interim orders. The bill provides that different ministers will have the authority to make interim orders without any prior check as to whether they are consistent with the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the enabling legislation. Members of the Bloc Québécois tried to reinstate that prerequisite, but all our amendments were defeated.

*Government Orders*

I also want to draw the attention of the House to the fact that those interim orders require the amendment of ten other statutes for the minister to be entitled to make interim orders. We should also mention that members of the House have no say in the process of enacting regulations before they take effect. This means that, in most cases, whenever an interim order is made, the Standing Joint Committee for the Scrutiny of Regulations will review the regulations only once they are in force, often several months later. That is not normal. An interim order should be made for a limited period of time. That way, since it will eventually come to an end, the committee review could very well happen too late.

We also have concerns about another item, the exchange of information. Under the provisions of the bill, data held by the RCMP and the Canadian Security Intelligence Service would not be destroyed soon enough. This is what we are talking about.

This means, for example, that, if I travel a lot, they would have all sorts of information about me without my knowing when it would be destroyed and what would become of it. Therefore, the freedom of individuals is being violated.

**Mr. Roger Gaudet (Berthier—Montcalm, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, this will be a rehash, but I think that the members opposite do not totally understand Bill C-17. So let us put this in context. I will first talk about the war on terrorism in general.

On September 11—

**An hon. member:** They like rehash.

**Mr. Roger Gaudet:** They like it because it is always good.

• (1700)

**The Deputy Speaker:** If members want to have a personal conversation, they will do it elsewhere. In the House of Commons, members must make their interventions through the Chair.

The hon. member for Berthier—Montcalm has the floor.

**Mr. Roger Gaudet:** Mr. Speaker, I apologize. On September 11, 2001, the United States was the target of deadly attacks. The world reacted quickly with an unprecedented mobilization to fight terrorism.

The Bloc Québécois was part of that mobilization. That day, on September 11, we spoke out strongly against the attacks and, in the following hours, we offered our cooperation to the federal government with regard to the emergency measures needed to deal with the situation. Later, in a speech made on September 17, 2001, our leader, the member for Laurier—Sainte-Marie, set out the principles that would guide our actions following these tragic events.

The response must reflect and respect our democratic values. In other words, we established the rules that would govern our actions from then on. In fighting terrorism, we must strike the right balance between freedom and security.

Unfortunately, as we will see later on, the federal government has failed. The measures it has proposed do not respect this balance. This is particularly true of bills such as Bill C-17, which we are debating today.

If I may I will proceed in chronological order. The first bill put forward in response to the terrorist attacks was Bill C-36. Although we were at first in favour of the idea of anti-terrorist legislation, we believe that the bill proposed by the federal government did not strike the right balance.

Indeed, the Bloc Québécois felt that Bill C-36 did not effectively balance freedom with security issues. Moreover, the amendments put forward in committee by the minister turned out to be insufficient to restore this balance.

Terrorists attacks and the terrorist threat have reached an exceptional level and created an exceptional context. Bill C-36 was an exceptional bill in answer to an exceptional situation. Should the terrorist threat subside, several of the measures proposed in Bill C-36 would become unacceptable.

This is why the Bloc Québécois asked the government to include a sunset clause in the bill so that it is no longer in force after three years, unless the House decides otherwise.

The Bloc Québécois asked that the Standing Committee on Justice and Human rights automatically review the act every year following a report by an independent commissioner. Those Bloc amendments were turned down.

These are the other elements of Bill C-36 which are problematic for the Bloc Québécois. The definition of terrorist acts is too broad and could lead to abuse against groups or individuals who have no connection with terrorism, as we saw last week.

The Attorney General and the Minister of Justice could withhold information by not applying the Access to Information Act, and there would be no safeguard. This was the conclusion of the Privacy Commissioner and a judicial review.

The act will only be reviewed in three years, which is much too long. The Minister of National Defence will be able to intercept international communications simply by making a written request to the Centre, without the authorization of a judge.

This bill includes all the provisions found in the bill on the registration of charities, which the Bloc condemned.

The government can list entities as terrorists without the authorization of a judge.

We tried to propose amendments to fix the problem, by adding, among other things, a sunset clause that would have limited the application of the act in time.

However, our amendments were rejected, and we felt that the amendments made by the minister fell far short. Consequently, we voted against the bill.

*Government Orders*

Later, allegedly as a complement to security enhancing measures, the government introduced Bill C-42, the public safety bill. From the day it was introduced, the Bloc Québécois expressed its opposition to the bill, judging that some of what was proposed went too far and actually had little to do with terrorism. For instance, the new power conferred upon ministers to make interim orders leaves too much room to arbitrariness. As for the military security zones, they were very poorly defined, and their designation left the door wide open to all sorts of abuse.

This bill was replaced with Bill C-55, and later by Bill C-17. Unfortunately, these two bills do not strike the balance required either.

If we look at the Bloc's position on military interventions as part of the fight against terrorism, we did support the military strikes in Afghanistan. We had asked that these take place under the umbrella of the United Nations, however. As far as the deployment of Canadian troops was concerned, we agreed, provided that it be subject to a debate and a vote in the House of Commons. Finally, we were very critical of the behaviour of the American administration, particularly with respect to the use of cluster bombs and the establishment of military tribunals for terrorists.

After these two bills on terrorism from the federal government, we can only conclude that the government has failed in the fight against terrorism. The measures presented do not strike the right balance between freedom and security. And even worse, the government is trying to use the fight against terrorism to justify exceptional measures, although some of these measures are neither necessary nor justifiable. We need only think of the use that could be made of the information obtained under Bill C-17 with respect to persons named in a warrant. We are opposed to Bill C-17, first, because we believe that basically it is bad law. It is also a sign of the failure of the federal government's strategy in the fight against terrorism.

● (1705)

The bill now before us is a new version of Bill C-55 on public safety, which was itself a new version of Bill C-42.

In speaking to Bill C-55, we concentrated on three major points: the controlled access military zones, or military security zones as they were known in Bill C-42; interim orders; and the exchange of information on airline passengers.

Of these three, the controlled access military zones mentioned in Bills C-42 and C-55 have been completely removed from this bill. This is quite a victory for us.

The bill still contains provisions on interim orders, although the time allowed for tabling an order in Parliament and getting cabinet approval has been shortened considerably. Nonetheless, our primary issue, the lack of a prior check for compliance, remains.

With respect to the exchange of information, the proposed amendments to the previous bills are clearly inadequate. The coverage of the proposed provisions is much broader than the war on terrorism, and the provisions do not strike a fair balance between security and privacy. We voted against this bill at second reading.

In committee, we tried to alleviate the various problems related to this legislation by moving numerous amendments during clause by

clause consideration. Nearly all our amendments were defeated. I want to share with the House the general tenor of the amendments we tried to make.

With regard to interim orders, Bill C-17 authorizes various ministers to issue such orders without first ensuring that they comply with the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms or the enabling legislation. We tried to re-establish this preliminary check, but our amendments were defeated.

In the latest version of the bill, interim orders must be tabled in Parliament within 15 days after they are issued. We find this to be excessive and asked that the time period be shortened to five days.

With regard to the powers of the RCMP and CSIS, this legislation includes provisions that confer sweeping powers on the Commissioner of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and the Director of the Canadian Security Intelligence Service with regard to passenger information compiled by the airlines.

In vain, we tried to amend the bill to limit the powers to retain or use information collected as a result. We wanted to prohibit this information from being used to execute a warrant of arrest. We must not forget the War Measures Act in Quebec in 1970.

We also wanted to ensure that the information collected would be destroyed within 24 hours after the plane carrying the passengers on whom information had been collected had landed, except if such information was reasonably necessary for transportation security purposes or an investigation related to national security. In this legislation, the time period within which such information must be destroyed remains seven days. In our view, this is too long.

Finally, we also tried to institute a mechanism to ensure that the Privacy Commissioner would receive a copy of the reasons justifying why some information had been retained; this was also voted down.

We also proposed other amendments. We tried to effect several changes, namely to the parts concerning the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act, the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention Implementation Act, and the Proceeds of Crime (Money Laundering) Act, either by suggesting amendments or voting against certain clauses. The purpose of these changes was to respond to the concerns of various groups that appeared before the committee. These changes were not made either. That is why the Bloc Québécois voted against this bill.

Let us now talk about military security zones. The notion of military security zones has completely disappeared from the bill.

● (1710)

The Bloc Québécois was unanimous on this. Dropping military security zones from the public safety bill is an important victory for us.

*Government Orders*

As for the declaration of special zones, this measure strikes us as far more reasonable than before. We will, however, be keeping a close eye on developments and will remain extremely vigilant in order to speak out against any potential abuse. We must also ensure that no zone will be created in Quebec without the consent of the Government of Quebec.

The bill still contains provisions allowing various ministers to make interim orders. There are two relatively minor changes that were made; orders must be tabled in Parliament within 15 days and the duration of the order has decreased from 45 to 14 days, that is, the length of time it is in effect without cabinet approval.

There was no prior check on charter compliance or compliance with the enabling legislation carried out by the Clerk of the Privy Council. I have a diagram with me that illustrates how the provisions on interim orders have evolved from Bill C-42 to Bill C-55 and Bill C-17.

Starting with the compliance check, the answer was no for all three bills.

As for the interim orders, under Bill C-42, these expired after 90 days except with approval of the governor in council; with Bill C-55, the time limit was 45 days except with approval of the governor in council. Now, with Bill C-17, it is 14 days, except with approval of the governor in council.

As far as tabling the orders in Parliament is concerned, there was no provision for this in Bill C-42, while in Bill C-55 the tabling had to take place within 15 sitting days after it was issued. In Bill C-17, it is 15 days.

Obviously, we can see that there have been marked improvements between the first version, Bill C-42 and the present one, Bill C-17. The main problem is still with us, however: the lack of a prior check for compliance with the charter and enabling legislation.

As for information sharing, Bill C-17 allows two stakeholders to obtain passenger information directly from airlines or operators of reservation systems: the Commissioner of the RCMP and the Director of CSIS.

This information can be requested if there is an imminent threat to airline security. Only CSIS can also request information for investigations into threats against the security of Canada. Bill C-55 would also have allowed this, in order to "identify a person for whom a warrant of arrest has been issued".

As a rule, information provided to the RCMP or CSIS must be destroyed within seven days after it is provided or obtained, unless it is reasonably required for the purposes of transportation security or the investigation of threats to the security of Canada.

On May 6 of this year, the Privacy Commissioner released a letter outlining his concerns with Bill C-55 in connection with the gathering of information by the RCMP or CSIS. His reservations were related to the provisions allowing the RCMP to use personal information on all airline passengers in order to locate persons for whom there was an outstanding warrant for any offence punishable by a sentence of imprisonment for five years or more.

He also expressed reservations about the provisions allowing the RCMP and CSIS to retain the personal information of passengers for such purposes as searching for suspicious travel patterns.

With respect to the first point, several provisions were problematic at the time. Among them, there was the definition of the term warrant and those provisions allowing the RCMP to collect and communicate information about individuals subject to an outstanding warrant. The commissioner suggested that these provisions be withdrawn from the bill.

Our present understanding is that the government tried to tighten up these provisions but was unsuccessful. As a matter of fact, while the RCMP can no longer obtain information for the purpose of finding an individual subject to a warrant, it can still convey to a peace officer information obtained through the provisions in Bill C-17 if it has reason to believe that this information would facilitate the execution of a warrant.

However, in actual fact, the RCMP decides by itself when there is a threat to transportation safety and can thus ask an airline for information on passengers. There is no mechanism controlling the use of this provision. In other words, the RCMP has *carte blanche*. Giving *carte blanche* is not always a good thing. Moreover, once it has obtained the information, nothing precludes the RCMP from keeping it, as long as the reasons for doing so are written down.

- (1715)

The government has tightened up the definition of warrant. In the previous version, it could have been an outstanding warrant for any offence punishable under federal law by imprisonment for five years or more.

Now the definition stipulates that there will be a regulation stating exactly what crimes are involved.

As to the second point, the commissioner also expressed serious reservations regarding how long the information could be retained. The seven day period during which the RCMP and CSIS may keep the information is excessive; 48 hours would be adequate. The fact that the RCMP and CSIS can keep this information indefinitely is of concern. There must be limits.

But, neither of these changes was made. As a result, on November 1, 2002, the Privacy Commissioner issued a press release regarding Bill C-17, in which he described the changes as being minor. He said:

—with only minimal and unsatisfactory changes in the replacement legislation, Bill C-17.

According to the commissioner:

The provision in question, section 4.82 of both bills, would give the RCMP and CSIS unrestricted access to the personal information held by airlines about all Canadian air travellers on domestic as well as international flights.

He added:

### *Government Orders*

—my concern is that the RCMP would also be expressly empowered to use this information to seek out persons wanted on warrants for Criminal Code offences that have nothing to do with terrorism, transportation security or national security.

In Canada, it is well established that we are not required to identify ourselves to police unless we are being arrested or we are carrying out a licensed activity such as driving. The right to anonymity with regard to the state is a crucial privacy right. Since we are required to identify ourselves to airlines as a condition of air travel and since section 4.82 would give the RCMP unrestricted access to the passenger information obtained by airlines, this would set the extraordinarily privacy-invasive precedent of effectively requiring compulsory self-identification to the police.

The changes that have been made in this provision in the new bill do nothing to address the fundamental issues of principle that are at stake.

The Government now proposes to have regulations limiting the Criminal Code offence warrants for which the RCMP will be searching. But this does nothing to address the fundamental point of principle that the police have no business using this extraordinary access to personal information to search for people wanted on warrants for any offences unrelated to terrorism.

As well, in the new bill the Government has removed the “identification of persons for whom a warrant has been issued” as a “purpose” for accessing passenger information under the legislation. But this is meaningless—indeed, disingenuous—

For all these reasons, we oppose this bill. Ever since the original bill was introduced, we have been speaking against a number of provisions which are still included in the bill. Despite all our efforts to improve the provisions that posed a problem, these remain unacceptable to us.

● (1720)

**Mr. Odina Desrochers (Lotbinière—L'Érable, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, first, I would like to congratulate my colleague from Berthier—Montcalm. With words, sentences and substance, he was able to summarize all the issues that are now in Bill C-17, Bill C-55, Bill C-42 and Bill C-36.

However, no matter what number is given to this bill, it still contains flaws. Since the beginning of this debate today, we have talked constantly about the balance that must exist between freedom and security. Paragraph by paragraph, my colleague from Berthier—Montcalm has gone over the issues in this debate and, above all, has pointed out the elements that are contrary to our fundamental values.

My question is quite simple. No matter what number the government is using, whether it is Bill C-42, Bill C-55, Bill C-36 or Bill C-17, why is my colleague still saying that he is against this bill?

**Mr. Roger Gaudet:** Mr. Speaker, to respond to my colleague, I have been around a while and I remember the war measures in 1970. I was living in Montreal then and it was not pleasant to walk in the city's streets. I believe that, at that time, the government took on some rights it did not have in implementing war measures without a valid reason.

If we look at everything that happened with the war measures, bombs were placed by RCMP officers. In this bill, the RCMP has many powers. It seems to me that it has already a lot and perhaps some should be taken away.

Members of Parliament should all decide together what we want in the future.

**Ms. Diane Bourgeois (Terrebonne—Blainville, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, when I spoke to Bill C-17 earlier, I said that I thought that the government just wanted to scare people. I said that there were organizations or groups which used the same methods as the

government and continued to spread this fear. I talked about my house insurance.

The member for Berthier—Montcalm is a former mayor; he has been the chief executive of a municipality. I would like to know what he thinks. If he were still mayor, would he let this kind of legislation go through in his municipality?

**Mr. Roger Gaudet:** Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Terrebonne—Blainville for her question. As mayor, I probably would not have made that decision. Mayors are very close to the people, maybe closer than MPs are. Let us say that, in a municipality, we can meet people all the time; we live with them.

With what I know, I would have been against this bill. I would have never dared put it on the table. There was no justification for it. It was not good for the people in terms of their freedom, and their safety was not threatened. Judging by the War Measures Act, the safety of the people was not threatened at all.

**Mr. Marcel Gagnon (Champlain, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague was referring to the events of 1970. He said that he did not want to name names, but there is one name that comes to mind for me. I am thinking of officer Samson who placed a bomb near the residence of former Prime Minister Trudeau. While he did not die, he at least lost the use of one arm.

That is when it was discovered that a good many of the bombs had been planted by the RCMP to try to discredit those who were working for Quebec's sovereignty. That does not mean that FLQ members were being protected, but that there were groups that wanted to be heard.

To show that these groups were reprehensible, for example, the RCMP was asked to steal a Parti Québécois membership list. That made everyone in Quebec very nervous and I, for one, very nearly lost my life.

In 1970 I was arrested and found myself looking down the barrels of two guns for an hour. I was arrested in Baie d'Urfé. I can report that, when one has done nothing wrong, and sees flashing lights and police officers everywhere, when one is taken for a criminal and has two guns pointed at one for more than an hour, until the error is discovered, giving more power to the police is not the first thing one would consider. I have always promised myself that I would think twice before I did anything of the sort.

After that incident, I told the police officers, “Now, to me you look like the bad guys”. Not all police officers are guilty of such disrespect, but when you have been held the way I was and the way others were in the 1970s, it leaves a scar. As my hon. friend pointed out, some 400 or 500 people were imprisoned for no valid reason, on the pretext of public safety. Give me a break. The only people safer were a few politicians.

Perhaps the politicians were helped to correct their errors, but the RCMP was asked to do something it never should have had to do. In my eyes, police forces in general lost much of their previous credibility. When the hon. member was talking about the 1970s, I was thinking about that event.

*Government Orders*

After September 11, we were told there was a need for security and I agree. I do not agree with those who commit crimes like the attacks on September 11. Nonetheless, after September 11, we heard some fine speeches from people who had put their finger on the problem.

I remember, after September 11, Tony Blair saying that now we must truly address the unrest in the world. We must ensure that there is more justice and deal with the root causes of what happened on September 11. Since then, those fine speeches have been shelved. The police are being asked to be repressive and to arrest anyone who looks the least bit dangerous.

If we had paid more attention to speeches like the one Tony Blair made the day after the attacks, there would be less fear today. We would not need Bill C-17. We would just have to ensure a little more justice in the world and stop stealing from those who cannot defend themselves. We go on about child poverty, but every day, more children are poor because of our policies that make the rich richer and the poor poorer.

If the bill did not give power to the police, but were used to ensure justice in the world, then all of my colleagues and I would vote for it. However, we will not vote for a bill such as Bill C-17.

● (1725)

**The Deputy Speaker:** I will put this in the comments category. We will now resume the debate, but I must inform the House that we have exceeded the five hours of debate. The speeches will be limited to 10 minutes.

The hon. member for Repentigny.

● (1730)

**Mr. Benoît Sauvageau (Repentigny, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I must say that I rise with considerable emotion after a comment or intervention like the one by my friend and colleague from Champlain. No bill, no motion, no subject in this House can be debated in this way, when a person has had an experience like that described by my friend and colleague.

Too often here in Ottawa, when we are discussing a bill, even if we want to be close to the public, we sometimes forget the distance that separates us MPs from our fellow citizens. A comment such as the one we have just heard reminds us that all the fine words we pronounce here have repercussions on our communities. The bills on which we vote will one day impact on the people in our communities, in our counties, in our municipalities. If we make poor decisions, they are the ones who will have to bear the brunt of our error, as in the circumstances the hon. member for Champlain has described to us.

We have just had a clear demonstration of that. It is why the Bloc Québécois is so sensitive to Bill C-17. We have seen concrete examples of why we feel that way, and why we are opposed to the bill. We have wanted to remedy the situation right from the start, in order to make this bill, which started off as Bill C-36, more acceptable.

It is quite ironic that we are dealing with a problem that occurred on September 11, 2001 by discussing it on October 7, 2003. It is as if

we were still discussing whether, if those tragic events had occurred here, who would be responsible for cleaning up the mess, the Minister of Industry or the Minister of National Defence.

More than two years after those tragic events, we are trying to remedy the situation through passage of a bill. We are still discussing the advantages of passing a public safety act, which started out as an antiterrorism act.

I will, if I may, give a little historical background on this Bill C-17 we have before us today.

As I mentioned earlier, Bill C-36 was introduced in response to terrorist attacks. Although we supported the idea of an antiterrorism bill—as it was originally called—we believe that this current bill disturbed the desired balance between security and freedom.

The Bloc Québécois felt that this would not ensure a fair balance between security and freedom. Furthermore, the amendments proposed in committee by the minister are clearly insufficient to restore that balance.

The Bloc Québécois did not oppose this legislation for the joy of opposing it. We did not block the bill, as we are often accused of doing. On the contrary, we tabled amendments, not to delay it, but to improve it and its implementation.

We had asked, and this is very important, for the bill to include a sunset clause. Something may happen, and perhaps this bill will no longer be needed in the future. There is a start date and an end date. This is not like legislation on the environment or the official languages. The official languages legislation had a sunset clause right from the start, meaning it was adopted one day and the next day it ceased to truly exist. The sun set very fast.

We asked that this bill be reviewed in one year and, second, that there be an end date. And if it needed to be extended, we would have been responsible and extended the bill.

We asked for an automatic review each year and not just every three years, as proposed. The sunset clause and the annual review, instead of every three years, were not significant changes, but rather corrections to bring the bill into line with its stated purpose, which is to protect the public from possible terrorist attacks or from the creation of terrorist groups.

We also found the bill's definition of terrorist acts overly broad.

● (1735)

Moreover, the fact that the attorney general could withhold information by not applying the Access to Information Act was not enough for us.

*Government Orders*

And there is also the fact that the bill will only be reviewed in three years' time, as I said before, and the fact that the Minister of National Defence would be able to intercept international communications simply by sending a written request to his officials. We also wanted to correct or clarify some other aspects to make the bill more acceptable, as I was saying previously.

Then Bill C-42 was introduced, followed by Bill C-55 and now by Bill C-17. We can see that this bill has evolved. Some of the amendments, some of the Bloc Québécois' concerns have been heard and we have gained a very significant victory with regard to the controlled access military zones.

The situation was corrected and the designation "controlled access military zones" was taken out of Bill C-42 and of the following bills. If that had not been done, Quebec City for example could have been identified as a controlled access military zone and been subject to the War Measures Act and the Public Safety Act or Antiterrorism Act, and federal laws could have been suspended in these controlled access military zones.

The Bloc Québécois has made a good presentation with respect to responsibility. Today we can say to everyone that even though we oppose Bill C-17 as it stands, at least we won a victory regarding the controlled access military zones.

But this is a special debate today, discussing a bill like this one that has an impact on people's individual freedom, rights and safety. At the same time, there is time allocation to gag us once again. We could set up a counter and keep track of the number of times they have forced through a time allocation motion.

Today, once again, the government House leader rose in the House to tell us that Bill C-17 is a very important bill. It is a bill on which consultations will be held, but in a very limited time frame. He told the members of Parliament and the message goes out to the population that bulldozer tactics are being used on a bill dealing with every man and woman's individual freedoms. I want to remind the House that it is extremely important and saddening that we are having closure imposed on this bill.

The last aspect of this legislation that particularly concerns us—and we oppose its application—are the powers to be granted to the RCMP. What image is the RCMP projecting today? I should ask, instead, what the Prime Minister and the government are doing to the RCMP's image, by using it for political purposes.

I want to give a few examples. There is Shawinigate, which concerns the golf course and the hotel. Three, four or even five years ago, the RCMP launched an investigation into apparent conflicts of interest. The report on this investigation has disappeared. Groupaction did not make three copies, that is for sure. If they did make three copies, then they lost all three. So, there is still no report, no investigation, and no conclusion to that investigation.

There is also the sponsorship scandal. Paul Coffin was investigated. The report will surely come out. The RCMP may be investigating others, the real big cases like Everest or Groupaction. We do not know and no one will tell us. In addition to this refusal to tell us, the investigation report will never be made public.

I feel it is totally unacceptable for a government to make use of the police for political purposes and thus to tarnish its image, particularly since it wants to give it more powers.

In addition to Shawinigate and the sponsorship scandals, now we have CINAR. They refuse to tell us whether there has been an investigation and whether there was a report. We do not want to know the report's contents, just whether or not it exists. That is all we want to know, and they will not tell us. They are even refusing to tell us whether there was an investigation or not, yet the then deputy prime minister and heritage minister gave us the name and phone number of the lady who was supposedly carrying it out. Today they will not even tell us if there was an investigation.

As for the Radwanski affair, here we have the same thing all over again. Maybe the RCMP will look into it. We will end up with more or less the same result as with the ethics counsellor, which is either nothing at all, or something that is totally useless.

We are therefore opposed to enhanced powers for the RCMP. In principle, we want to improve this bill and to make it acceptable. As it is, however, we will continue our opposition to it.

● (1740)

[English]

**Mr. Joe Comartin (Windsor—St. Clair, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I assume that I have the last few minutes of debate on this bill. I want to concentrate my comments as succinctly as possible on the effect of this bill, specifically on the community that is going to be most targeted.

I listened to a number of the other speakers and some of the information that came out of the committee. Everybody agreed that this bill is about balancing security and safety with civil liberties and civil rights. When doing that balancing act, if we start from an atmosphere of hysteria and fear, we know where we will end up. That is true, whether it was during the second world war when we incarcerated the Japanese Canadians, members of the Italian community, and members of the German community, or whether it was during the October crisis. The reaction in fear to a crisis was nowhere near proportional to the need for the War Measures Act.

We are in the same atmosphere post-September 11. We get this kind of legislation where there is no balance, where civil liberties and civil rights are very clearly a secondary consideration. It is a bill that turns over those rights and the ability to abuse those rights to a very small cadre of people in this country and it does not allow for any meaningful oversight of the role that those individuals would play.

It was very interesting that at the time the War Measures Act was used, we did not have any oversight body. We saw the kind of abuse that went on as a result of using that legislation. It is the reason that we did away with it when calmer times prevailed.

What are we doing now? We are repeating the same mistake. We are putting into place legislation, and this is the end of the pieces of legislation after Bill C-36, that will rebuild that infrastructure which is wide open to abuse. At the same time as we are doing that, we are limiting if not eliminating any oversight by Parliament and realistically by our courts.



This legislation in many respects has been drafted in such broad language that our courts will have a very difficult time using the charter to protect individual citizens. What we have learned post-Bill C-36 is that the Muslim community and people who come from certain areas of the world are going to be most negatively impacted. We are going to see a very real reduction in their rights and with this bill in particular, a reduction in their right to travel. If they travel to the Middle East or into Pakistan, they will now have a profile which makes them suspicious. Their ability to be involved in politics in this country will have a chill on it because they are going to be seen as associating with certain groups.

The reality is that is the consequence of this legislation. We will not be able to claim ignorance because we know from the results of Bill C-36 what the consequences will be.

• (1745)

**The Deputy Speaker:** It being 5:45 p.m., pursuant to order made earlier today, it is my duty to interrupt the proceedings and put forthwith every question necessary to dispose of third reading stage of the bill now before the House.

The question is on the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

**The Deputy Speaker:** All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

**Some hon. members:** Yea.

**The Deputy Speaker:** All those opposed will please say nay.

**Some hon. members:** Nay.

**The Speaker:** In my opinion the yeas have it.

*And more than five members having risen:*

**The Deputy Speaker:** Call in the members.

• (1815)

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

*(Division No. 238)*

**YEAS**

Members

Abbott	Ablonczy
Adams	Alcock
Allard	Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands)
Assadourian	Augustine
Bagnell	Bailey
Barnes (London West)	Barrette
Bélangier	Bellemare
Bennett	Benoit
Bertrand	Bevilacqua
Binet	Bonin
Bonwick	Boudria
Bradshaw	Breitkreuz
Brown	Burton
Byrne	Caccia
Cadman	Calder
Cannis	Caplan
Carignan	Casson

Castonguay
Cauchon
Coderre
Comuzzi
Cuzner
DeVillers
Dion
Dromisky
Duncan
Easter
Epp
Farrah
Fontana
Frulla
Gallant
Godfrey
Goodale
Graham
Grose
Hanger
Harvard
Hill (Prince George—Peace River)
Hinton
Ianno
Jaffer
Jobin
Jordan
Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
Kilgour (Edmonton Southeast)
Laberte
LeBlanc
Leung
Longfield
Lunney (Nanaimo—Alberni)
Macklin
Malhi
Manley
Marleau
Matthews
McCormick
McLellan
McTeague
Mills (Red Deer)
Mitchell
Murphy
Nault
O'Brien (London—Fanshawe)
Obhrai
Pagtakhan
Patry
Peric
Peterson
Phinney
Pillitteri
Proulx
Rajotte
Reed (Halton)
Reynolds
Robillard
Saada
Scherrer
Scott
Shepherd
Skelton
Sorenson
St-Jacques
St. Denis
Stinson
Szabo
Thibeault (Saint-Lambert)
Toews
Torsney
Valeri
Volpe
White (Langley—Abbotsford)
Wilfert
Wood

Bachand (Saint-Jean)
Bigras

*Government Orders*

Catterall
Chamberlain
Collenette
Copps
Day
Dhaliwal
Discepola
Drouin
Duplain
Eggleton
Eyking
Fitzpatrick
Forseth
Fry
Galloway
Goldring
Gouk
Grey
Guamieri
Harper
Harvey
Hill (MacLeod)
Hubbard
Jackson
Jennings
Johnston
Karetak-Lindell
Keys
Knutson
Lastewka
Lee
Lincoln
Lunn (Saanich—Gulf Islands)
MacAulay
Mahoney
Maloney
Marcil
Martin (LaSalle—Émard)
McCallum
McGuire
McNally
Merrifield
Minna
Moore
Myers
Neville
O'Reilly
Pacetti
Paradis
Penson
Peschisolido
Pettigrew
Pickard (Chatham—Kent Essex)
Pratt
Provenzano
Redman
Regan
Ritz
Rock
Savoy
Schmidt
Sgro
Simard
Solberg
Spencer
St-Julien
Stewart
Strahl
Thibault (West Nova)
Thompson (Wild Rose)
Tonks
Ur
Vanclief
Whelan
White (North Vancouver)
Williams
Yelich— 188

**NAYS**

Members

Bergeron
Blaikie

*Supply*

Borotsik	Bourgeois
Brison	Cardin
Casey	Clark
Comartin	Crête
Davies	Desjarlais
Desrochers	Duceppe
Fournier	Gagnon (Champlain)
Gagnon (Lac-Saint-Jean—Saguenay)	Gagnon (Québec)
Gaudet	Gauthier
Godin	Guimond
Herron	Keddy (South Shore)
Lalonde	Lebel
MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough)	Marceau
Mark	Masse
Ménard	Nystrom
Paquette	Perron
Picard (Drummond)	Plamondon
Proctor	Robinson
Rocheleau	Roy
Sauvageau	Schellenberger
St-Hilaire	Stoffer
Telegdi	Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest)
Wasylcia-Leis	Wayne — 50

## PAIRED

## Members

Anderson (Victoria)	Asselin
Bulte	Charbonneau
Dalphond-Guiral	Guay
Laframboise	Loubier
Owen	Speller
Tirabassi	Tremblay — 12

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos):** I declare the motion carried.

(Bill read the third time and passed)

\* \* \*

● (1820)

## SUPPLY

## ALLOTTED DAY—FEDERAL GAS TAX

The House resumed from October 2 consideration of the motion.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos):** Pursuant to the order made Thursday, October 2 the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the opposition motion of the member for Port Moody—Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam.

The question is on the motion.

● (1825)

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

(Division No. 239)

## YEAS

## Members

Abbott	Ablonczy
Allard	Anders
Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands)	Augustine
Bagnell	Bailey
Barnes (London West)	Barrette
Bélangier	Bellemare
Bennett	Benoit
Bertrand	Bevilacqua
Binet	Blaikie
Bonin	Bonwick
Borotsik	Boudria
Bradshaw	Breitkreuz
Brison	Burton
Byrne	Cadman

Calder	Cannis
Caplan	Carignan
Casey	Casson
Castonguay	Catterall
Cauchon	Chamberlain
Clark	Collenette
Comartin	Comuzzi
Cuzner	Davies
Day	Desjarlais
DeVillers	Dhaliwal
Dion	Discepola
Dromisky	Drouin
Duncan	Duplain
Easter	Eggleton
Epp	Eyking
Farrah	Fitzpatrick
Fontana	Forsyth
Frulla	Fry
Gallant	Galloway
Godfrey	Godin
Goldring	Goodale
Gouk	Graham
Grey	Grose
Guarnieri	Hanger
Harper	Harvard
Harvey	Herron
Hill (Macleod)	Hill (Prince George—Peace River)
Hinton	Hubbard
Ianno	Jackson
Jaffer	Jennings
Jobin	Johnston
Jordan	Karetak-Lindell
Karygiannis	Keddy (South Shore)
Kenney (Calgary Southeast)	Keyes
Kilgour (Edmonton Southeast)	Knutson
Laliberte	Lastewka
LeBlanc	Lee
Leung	Longfield
Lunn (Saanich—Gulf Islands)	Lunney (Nanaimo—Alberni)
MacAulay	MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough)
Macklin	Mahoney
Malhi	Maloney
Marcil	Mark
Marleau	Martin (LaSalle—Émard)
Masse	Matthews
McCallum	McCormick
McGuire	McLellan
McNally	McTeague
Merrifield	Mills (Red Deer)
Minna	Mitchell
Moore	Murphy
Myers	Nault
Neville	Nystrom
O'Brien (London—Fanshawe)	O'Reilly
Obhrai	Pacetti
Pagtakhan	Paradis
Patry	Penson
Peric	Peterson
Pettigrew	Phinney
Pickard (Chatham—Kent Essex)	Pillitteri
Pratt	Proctor
Proulx	Provenzano
Rajotte	Redman
Reed (Halton)	Regan
Reynolds	Ritz
Robillard	Robinson
Rock	Saada
Savoy	Schellenberger
Scherrer	Schmidt
Scott	Sgro
Simard	Skelton
Solberg	Sorenson
Spencer	St-Jacques
St-Julien	St. Denis
Stewart	Stinson
Stoffer	Strahl
Szabo	Telegdi
Thibault (West Nova)	Thibault (Saint-Lambert)
Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest)	Thompson (Wild Rose)
Toews	Tonks
Torsney	Ur
Valeri	Vanclief
Volpe	Wasylcia-Leis
Wayne	Whelan

White (North Vancouver)  
Wilfert  
Wood

White (Langley—Abbotsford)  
Williams  
Yelich— 202

**NAYS**

Members

Bachand (Saint-Jean)  
Bigras  
Brown  
Cardin  
Crête  
Duceppe  
Gagnon (Champlain)  
Gagnon (Québec)  
Gauthier  
Lalonde  
Marceau  
Paquette  
Picard (Drummond)  
Rocheleau  
Sauvageau  
St-Hilaire— 31

Bergeron  
Bourgeois  
Caccia  
Copps  
Desrochers  
Fournier  
Gagnon (Lac-Saint-Jean—Saguenay)  
Gaudet  
Guimond  
Lebel  
Ménard  
Perron  
Plamondon  
Roy  
Shepherd

**PAIRED**

Members

Anderson (Victoria)  
Bulte  
Dalphond-Guiral  
Laframboise  
Owen  
Tirabassi

Asselin  
Charbonneau  
Guay  
Loubier  
Speller  
Tremblay— 12

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos):** I declare the motion carried.

**PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS**

[English]

**THE ENVIRONMENT**

The House resumed from October 3 consideration of the motion, and of the amendment.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos):** Pursuant to order made Friday, October 3 the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the amendment to Motion No. 399 under private members' business.

The question is on the amendment.

• (1830)

(The House divided on the amendment, which was agreed to on the following division:)

(Division No. 240)

**YEAS**

Members

Abbott  
Adams  
Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands)  
Bagnell  
Bélanger  
Benoit  
Bigras  
Borotsik  
Breitkreuz  
Burton  
Cadman  
Casey  
Clark

Ablonczy  
Anders  
Bachand (Saint-Jean)  
Bailey  
Bellemare  
Bergeron  
Blaikie  
Bourgeois  
Brisson  
Caccia  
Cardin  
Casson  
Comartin

Crête  
Day  
Desrochers  
Duncan  
Farrah  
Forseth  
Gagnon (Champlain)  
Gagnon (Québec)  
Gaudet  
Godin  
Gouk  
Guimond  
Harper  
Hill (MacLeod)  
Hinton  
Jackson  
Johnston  
Karygiannis  
Kenney (Calgary Southeast)  
Lalonde  
Leung  
Lunn (Saanich—Gulf Islands)  
MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough)  
Mark  
Matthews  
McTeague  
Merrifield  
Minna  
Nystrom  
Obhrai  
Penson  
Picard (Drummond)  
Proctor  
Reynolds  
Robinson  
Roy  
Schellenberger  
Scott  
Solberg  
Spencer  
Stinson  
Thompson (Wild Rose)  
Toews  
Wayne  
White (North Vancouver)  
Yelich— 117

*Private Members' Business*

Davies  
Desjarlais  
Duceppe  
Epp  
Fitzpatrick  
Fournier  
Gagnon (Lac-Saint-Jean—Saguenay)  
Gallant  
Gauthier  
Goldring  
Grey  
Hanger  
Herron  
Hill (Prince George—Peace River)  
Ianno  
Jaffer  
Jordan  
Keddy (South Shore)  
Laliberte  
Lebel  
Lincoln  
Lunney (Nanaimo—Alberni)  
Marceau  
Masse  
McNally  
Ménard  
Mills (Red Deer)  
Moore  
O'Brien (London—Fanshawe)  
Paquette  
Perron  
Plamondon  
Rajotte  
Ritz  
Rocheleau  
Sauvageau  
Schmidt  
Skelton  
Sorenson  
St-Hilaire  
Stoffer  
Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest)  
Wasylcia-Leis  
White (Langley—Abbotsford)  
Williams

**NAYS**

Members

Allard  
Barnes (London West)  
Bertrand  
Binet  
Boudria  
Brown  
Calder  
Caplan  
Castonguay  
Cauchon  
Collenette  
Cuzner  
Dhaliwal  
Discepola  
Drouin  
Easter  
Eyking  
Galloway  
Graham  
Guarnieri  
Harvey  
Karetak-Lindell  
Kilgour (Edmonton Southeast)  
Lastewka  
MacAulay  
Mahoney  
Maloney  
Marleau  
McCallum  
McGuire  
Mitchell  
Myers  
Neville

Augustine  
Barrette  
Bevilacqua  
Bonin  
Bradshaw  
Byrne  
Cannis  
Carignan  
Catterall  
Chamberlain  
Copps  
DeVillers  
Dion  
Dromisky  
Duplain  
Eggleton  
Fry  
Goodale  
Grose  
Harvard  
Jobin  
Keys  
Knutson  
Lee  
Macklin  
Malhi  
Marcil  
Martin (LaSalle—Émard)  
McCormick  
McLellan  
Murphy  
Nault  
Pacetti

*Private Members' Business*

Pagtakhan  
 Patry  
 Pickard (Chatham—Kent Essex)  
 Proulx  
 Reed (Halton)  
 Robillard  
 Saada  
 Scherrer  
 Shepherd  
 St-Jacques  
 Stewart  
 Telegdi  
 Thibeault (Saint-Lambert)  
 Torsney  
 Valeri  
 Whelan  
 Wood— 99

Paradis  
 Pettigrew  
 Pillitteri  
 Redman  
 Regan  
 Rock  
 Savoy  
 Sgro  
 Simard  
 St. Denis  
 Szabo  
 Thibault (West Nova)  
 Tonks  
 Ur  
 Vanclief  
 Wilfert

Hinton  
 Jackson  
 Jordan  
 Laliberte  
 Lastewka  
 Leung  
 MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough)  
 Mark  
 McTeague  
 Mills (Red Deer)  
 Neville  
 O'Brien (London—Fanshawe)  
 Perron  
 Plamondon  
 Reynolds  
 Rocheleau  
 Sauvageau  
 Schellenberger  
 Skelton  
 St-Hilaire  
 Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest)  
 Wasylycia-Leis

Ianno  
 Jennings  
 Keddy (South Shore)  
 Lalonde  
 Lebel  
 Lunn (Saanich—Gulf Islands)  
 Marceau  
 Masse  
 Ménard  
 Minna  
 Nystrom  
 Paquette  
 Picard (Drummond)  
 Proctor  
 Robinson  
 Roy  
 Savoy  
 Scott  
 Spencer  
 Stoffer  
 Toews  
 Wayne— 78

## PAIRED

## Members

Anderson (Victoria)  
 Bulte  
 Dalphond-Guiral  
 Laframboise  
 Owen  
 Tirabassi

Asselin  
 Charbonneau  
 Guay  
 Loubier  
 Speller  
 Tremblay— 12

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos):** I declare the amendment carried.

The next question is on the main motion, as amended. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

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

**Some hon. members:** Yea.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos):** All those opposed will please say nay.

**Some hon. members:** Nay.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos):** In my opinion the nays have it.

• (1845)

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

*(Division No. 241)*

## YEAS

## Members

Ablonczy  
 Bélangier  
 Bergeron  
 Blaikie  
 Bourgeois  
 Cadman  
 Casey  
 Comartin  
 Davies  
 Desrochers  
 Duncan  
 Farrah  
 Gagnon (Champlain)  
 Gagnon (Québec)  
 Gauthier  
 Godin  
 Guimond

Bachand (Saint-Jean)  
 Bellemare  
 Bigras  
 Borotsik  
 Brison  
 Cardin  
 Clark  
 Crête  
 Desjarlais  
 Duceppe  
 Eyking  
 Fournier  
 Gagnon (Lac-Saint-Jean—Saguenay)  
 Gaudet  
 Godfrey  
 Gouk  
 Herron

Allard  
 Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands)  
 Bagnell  
 Barnes (London West)  
 Benoit  
 Bevilacqua  
 Bonin  
 Bradshaw  
 Brown  
 Byrne  
 Cannis  
 Carignan  
 Castonguay  
 Cauchon  
 Collenette  
 Day  
 Dhaliwal  
 Dromisky  
 Duplain  
 Eggleton  
 Fitzpatrick  
 Frulla  
 Gallant  
 Goldring  
 Graham  
 Grose  
 Hanger  
 Harvey  
 Hill (Prince George—Peace River)  
 Jaffer  
 Johnston  
 Kenney (Calgary Southeast)  
 Kilgour (Edmonton Southeast)  
 LeBlanc  
 MacAulay  
 Mahoney  
 Maloney  
 Marleau  
 McCallum  
 McGuire  
 Merrifield  
 Moore  
 Myers  
 Obhrai  
 Pagtakhan  
 Patry  
 Pettigrew  
 Pickard (Chatham—Kent Essex)  
 Proulx  
 Redman  
 Regan  
 Robillard  
 Scherrer  
 Sgro  
 Simard  
 Sorenson  
 St. Denis

## NAYS

## Members

Anders  
 Augustine  
 Bailey  
 Barrette  
 Bertrand  
 Binet  
 Boudria  
 Breitzkreuz  
 Burton  
 Calder  
 Caplan  
 Casson  
 Catterall  
 Chamberlain  
 Cuzner  
 DeVillers  
 Dion  
 Drouin  
 Easter  
 Epp  
 Forseth  
 Fry  
 Gallaway  
 Goodale  
 Grey  
 Guamieri  
 Harvard  
 Hill (MacLeod)  
 Hubbard  
 Jobin  
 Karetak-Lindell  
 Keys  
 Knutson  
 Lee  
 Macklin  
 Malhi  
 Marcil  
 Martin (LaSalle—Émard)  
 McCormick  
 McLellan  
 Mitchell  
 Murphy  
 Nault  
 Pacetti  
 Paradis  
 Penson  
 Phinney  
 Pillitteri  
 Rajotte  
 Reed (Halton)  
 Ritz  
 Saada  
 Schmidt  
 Shepherd  
 Solberg  
 St-Jacques  
 Stewart

Stinson  
Szabo  
Thibault (West Nova)  
Thompson (Wild Rose)  
Torsney  
Valeri  
Whelan  
White (North Vancouver)  
Williams  
Yelich— 133

Strahl  
Telegdi  
Thibeault (Saint-Lambert)  
Tonks  
Ur  
Vanclief  
White (Langley—Abbotsford)  
Wilfert  
Wood

#### PAIRED

##### Members

Anderson (Victoria)  
Bulte  
Dalphond-Guiral  
Laframboise  
Owen  
Tirabassi

Asselin  
Charbonneau  
Guay  
Loubier  
Speller  
Tremblay— 12

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos):** I declare the motion lost.

It being 6:45 p.m., the House will now proceed to the consideration of private members' business as listed on today's Order Paper.

\* \* \*

#### INCOME TAX ACT

**Mr. Peter Stoffer (Sackville—Musquodoboit Valley—Eastern Shore, NDP)** moved that Bill C-210, An Act to amend the Income Tax Act (amateur sport fees), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

He said: Madam Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to rise again to speak to Bill C-210. Not only is the bill a way to give a little back to the taxpayers of Canada and their families, but it is also a way to save potentially millions of dollars in our health care system and possibly even in our justice system.

The reason for that is what the bill seeks to do. People who enrol in sporting activities and clubs or who have children or dependants enrolled in sporting activities and clubs have approached me and I am sure all members of the House of Commons, regardless of political affiliation, to indicate the high cost of fees throughout the country to register children in hockey, baseball or whatever the sport may be. The bill seeks to offer people an opportunity to get a tax refund.

For example, if a person registers their child in a minor hockey program for \$400, the bill provides that the person could claim the \$400 as a tax deduction similar to a charity donation. The same percentage of tax refund would apply.

This is one of saying to the taxpayers of Canada, "Here is a little bit back". And if we can encourage physical participation in sport, regardless of age, we would have a much more healthy and vibrant society.

I have been involved in sports for my entire life. The sport of which I am most fond, of course, is soccer. When I started playing soccer in Richmond, British Columbia, the fee to join was \$2. Nobody complained about the fee at that time. Now in Nova Scotia the fee is \$90 per child. I have two kids, so it costs \$180. A lot of people find that prohibitive. They simply cannot afford to put their children in this type of sport, and soccer is one of the most inexpensive sports out there in terms of equipment required.

#### *Private Members' Business*

The reality is that we should be doing all we can to encourage physical activity for our children and, for that matter, for their families, especially the parents. People would get back into shape and we would become a much healthier society.

Does the bill address the issue of those who are on social assistance and simply cannot afford the fee to begin with? No, it does not, but being in the fifth party in the House of Commons on the backbench here I think it would be very wise for me to lob this bill over to the government members and tell them to look at it, because it is something we need to debate. This is something we need to encourage. We need to encourage more families to be involved in sports and physical activity, for a lifelong adventure, because if we are involved in sports when we are young, we will be involved in physical activity for the remainder of our lives.

We know that one of the greatest crises facing the country right now is obesity in children. Probably half the children in this country are obese. The reason is that we have become a techno-society. Kids will sit in front of the television, Nintendo games or movies and do nothing but sit. Many of us are couch potatoes. In fact, many in this House of Commons could not walk up seven flights of stairs without choking to death.

We need to change that. I think the way to do it is through the tax system by offering people an opportunity to claim some of the fees back as a tax consideration. If we do that and if people are encouraged to become involved in physical activity, I am quite sure that millions of dollars could be saved in the health care system. It is amazing that we sit in the House of Commons and demand that \$2 billion or even more go to the health care system. We are always talking about the nth degree. What I mean is that we put money into the health care system to care for people who are sick but we should be trying to prevent people from getting sick because they are out of shape. We should encourage them to become involved in physical activities, in community sports for example, because nothing brings this country together better than amateur sports.

I notice that the government has no problems at all in assisting Olympic athletes or hockey teams when they compete in the Olympics, but why not help the very young to get an initial start in amateur sports by allowing their parents some of their own money back through the tax system?

● (1850)

This would free up more funds for families and quite possibly encourage more people to become active in sports, especially in amateur sports. Who knows: the young kids we help out today may very well be our future Olympians down the road. By doing that we would be encouraging a much better society than we have today. We all know that a healthy society is a very proactive society and one that will benefit everyone in the long term in terms of our health care.

As well, studies have shown time and time again that when groups of children are involved in sports activities those activities prevent them from getting into the justice system.

*Private Members' Business*

How many times in my own riding and in ridings throughout the country have MPs opened basketball courts, hockey rinks or new tennis courts, something of that nature, where a community has decided there is a need for their children that must be met?

Just a few years ago in the great community of Ship Harbour, Nova Scotia, I participated in the grand opening of a basketball court for the small community. That may not seem like a big deal, but the parents in that community identified a need for their children. The government was not there to help with any funding, although the parents did get a bit of money from their local councillor. People in that community did their own fundraising. They held bake sales and other things and built a basketball court, which is used all the time by the kids in that community. It is a wonderful thing to see the kids in this small community with an area where they can go to play.

We constantly hear about kids in communities throughout the country, especially kids in rural areas, who have nothing to do. The reason? There are no recreational facilities, no coaches and none of the framework that is required for these kids to participate. If we get them at a young age, we can encourage them to be active in sports lifelong.

Many of us in the House of Commons are active in sports. Members from both sides of the House are active in sports and all kinds of events. We have the House of Commons soccer club called the Commoners. The reason for the name is that this is exactly how we play: very common. The reality is that this gets MPs from all sides of the House together in an evening of fun. In fact, I encourage everyone to come out on October 22 and watch their fabulous members of Parliament from the five parties in the House of Commons defeat, once again, the brand new, young pages who are in the House today. This game will take place on the Supreme Court lawn. We have challenged them to a friendly sporting activity. I can assure everyone, on the record, because the pages cannot speak and I can, that we will defeat them one more time and hold the cup high for the House of Commons.

This is what I am saying. Even though that was in jest and it is fun, sports are fun. Physical activity is fun. But it is also very expensive. Again, if we can alleviate a bit of the financial pressure on families throughout the country, we will be doing them a great service. Besides, that is what we are here for. We are here to encourage a better society and to cooperate. Nobody wants to be out of shape. Nobody wants to develop bad habits at a young age. We can all change.

Not you, Madam Speaker. I think you are in great shape and I know you do a lot of physical activity in la belle province. The reality is that you are a role model and others need to follow your example.

A small way to promote activity in sports is this way, through the tax system. It would not solve all our concerns, but it would be one small way of recognizing the efforts of families, those hardworking taxpayers of this country who pay a lot of money to have their children registered in sports. If only we could say to them that if they spend  $x$  number of dollars on a particular item, they would get a bit back through their taxes. I think people throughout the country would say bravo to the House of Commons for this initiative.

We all know about soccer moms and hockey dads, et cetera. We know for a fact that many of them dedicate a large part of their lives to their children's activities. Once their kids are active in sports, that is what parents do. They dedicate their all weekends and nights and everything else to ensuring that their kids get the best of both worlds in terms of joining a team and taking part in a sporting activity.

Madam Speaker, I do not know if you yourself have ever taken part in team sports but I have done so my whole life and it is absolutely wonderful. Lifelong friendships are developed. Sports can be a lifelong healthy activity. Sports make people feel better and make them healthier.

● (1855)

I also cannot help but notice the number of people who have joined fitness clubs to get themselves into better shape. It is wonderful. We should encourage more people to do that. I admit that I could probably lose a few pounds myself and I am working on it. However through the tax system this is a great way we could do this.

I encourage all members of the House of Commons to carefully reflect upon the bill. I know it will not provide all the answers or solve all the problems but it is a small way that we can encourage it.

I know the government has fiscal responsibilities. I know it has concerns to meet in terms of balancing the books and everything. However if it can rush a bill like Bill C-48, which would offer millions and millions of dollars in tax concessions to the mining sector of the country, although for valid reasons, such as promoting investment and creating jobs in rural and northern parts of the country, but which will cost the treasury around \$260 million by the year 2007, if we can help those companies, many of which are foreign owned, then surely we can find the time as members of Parliament to say to individuals and families, especially the taxpayers in our country, that we will look at them in a more favourable light and ensure that when they put money into sporting activities, club services or whatever, that they should be able to claim a bit of that back on their taxes.

I am not asking for the full amount to be tax deductible. I am asking for a small portion which would be exactly the same as a charitable donation. If we could achieve that it would go a long way.

In my own riding I have many people who dedicate a large part of their lives coaching their children. I also take the time to coach during the summertime. People dedicate a lot of time coaching basketball, hockey, baseball, gymnastics, whatever the sport may be. They love nothing better than to show a young person a particular skill in a sport and then watch that kid move forward.

We have a lot of people in our country who are simply not part of the sporting world because they simply cannot afford it or their parents do not have the funding or the money to get them into sports. Maybe this is one way to encourage and assist them to do that. If we can leave more money in the pockets of the average Canadian, they in turn could use those funds and perhaps be able to assist the various clubs and organizations throughout the country.

*Private Members' Business*

I encourage my colleagues in the Alliance, the Bloc, the Conservative Party and the Liberal Party to support the motion. I know they may have particular points of view that may differ or may even be similar in some regards but I encourage them to support the bill. I know many of them are active in sports. I know the member for Medicine Hat himself is a fine athlete and I know he would want to support the bill, especially for his families.

The member for Halifax West is an outstanding soccer player for the House of Commons. We just played soccer a couple of weeks ago. He also has his children enrolled in sports. He and his wife know exactly what it is like to drive the kids here and there. He knows it is also expensive for those particular sports. I would encourage my colleague from Halifax West, my neighbour next door, to also support the bill. What a great plug that would be for him in his next householder to say to the people that he supports this wonderful initiative.

Again I encourage support throughout the House of Commons and I thank the House of Commons very much for the opportunity to bring this important issue to debate today.

• (1900)

**Mr. Shawn Murphy (Hillsborough, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I rise today to speak to Bill C-210, a private member's bill that proposes changes to the Income Tax Act that would allow individuals to claim a tax credit for fees paid for their participation or the participation of a dependant in amateur sports.

At first blush it is hard to disagree with the intent or the objectives of the bill. Any time we can get more people involved in amateur sports it is good for society. It goes into the health envelope: it increases participation and it decreases health expenses, as the learned member has indicated.

However it is my view that we need to review this proposal in light of what it tries to achieve and how it tries to achieve it.

First, it would appear that the hon. member's proposal has a clear and honourable intent: to encourage Canadians to participate in amateur sports. The government shares that goal with the member for Sackville—Musquodoboit Valley—Eastern Shore. We too recognize the importance of amateur sports and the importance of participation in sports and physical fitness activities.

Each year we contribute \$77 million to Sport Canada. Let me tell members of the House some of the great things that Sport Canada does. It provides funds to amateur sports organizations to increase sports participation, support the development of young athletes and improve access to sport by underrepresented groups. It provides financial support to Canada's elite athletes to help them with their training and competition needs. It backs a wide range of sporting events held in Canada, both at the national and international levels.

We strengthened our commitment to sport and fitness in the most recent budget. We are now providing a further \$70 million over five years for amateur sports. That includes \$45 million to increase Canadians' participation in sports and other fitness activities and \$25 million to support high performance athletes.

While we may share the member's objectives, we do not agree with the approach. The member's proposal suggests changing the tax

system. I would contend that using the tax system for this is neither cost effective nor is it fair.

At this point let us take a closer look at how ineffective the hon. member's proposal would be.

The government is committed to encouraging Canadians to include physical activity in their daily lives and to help them reduce the barriers that prevent them from being active.

There are many such barriers. Statistics Canada reports several reasons that Canadians do not participate in physical activity. We all personally know many of these reasons: lack of time, lack of interest and health, injury or age concerns.

In fact, we have to look down the list somewhat to the barriers to participation before we get to the cost. I am not for a minute downplaying the cost because cost is a very real factor, especially when we are speaking about children from low income families, but many activities that are part of a healthy lifestyle cost very little. Swimming, walking and cycling are very good examples.

It is my view that the hon. member's proposal would do very little to encourage inactive Canadians to become active in amateur sports or increase their level of physical activity. In other words, this proposal would be ineffective. Even though this proposal would be ineffective, it is important to note that it would come at a very high cost.

According to Statistics Canada, the average Canadian household spends approximately \$275 per year on recreational facilities and membership fees. Providing a 16% tax credit on these expenditures would cost the federal government almost half a billion dollars in lost tax revenue. And this money would be spent without having a significant impact on the level of physical activity of all Canadians.

• (1905)

In fact, almost all this tax money would end up, I submit, subsidizing the 8.3 million Canadian adults already participating in amateur sport. I believe the intent of the learned member's bill is to encourage people to get off the couch and into the gym, not to subsidize the people who are already participating in amateur sport.

Therefore, at a great cost, the hon. member's proposal would produce very little benefit in terms of increasing participation in amateur sport and fitness activities.

I certainly would look at other areas, certainly the subsidizing of children from low income families. I have seen it in my own community with soccer, baseball, and especially hockey. I think hockey is the worst example. Kids in low income families just cannot afford to participate in these sports. The sport has moved beyond them with these elite teams; it has moved beyond the original intent and certainly there is ample room for governments to move in that area, but again, this is not the answer.

*Private Members' Business*

As a general rule, under the current tax system tax deductions or credits are generally provided for one of two things. They either apply to expenses to earn income, things like employment insurance premiums, union dues and child care expenses, with which we are all familiar, or they apply to non-discretionary expenses that significantly reduce a taxpayer's ability to pay tax, such as above average medical expenses. Tax relief is not normally provided with respect to specific personal expenses that are incurred at an individual's discretion.

What message would the federal government be sending if, as the hon. member proposes, we did use the tax system to subsidize those consumers who choose to pay fees to participate in amateur sport? That such fees are more important than other personal expenditures, like sending a child to a theatre or to singing lessons? These are examples.

We would be asking those Canadians who choose not to pay such fees to subsidize those Canadians who do. We would be asking Canadians who choose to take part in physical activities such as jogging or cycling, which generally do not require a payment of fees, or who choose to spend their spare time in other non-sport related hobbies or activities, to subsidize those Canadians who choose to participate in sports that do require a payment of fees, such as golf and downhill skiing.

Let us talk about golf. Golf is the most popular participation sport for Canadians. More than 1.8 million Canadians regularly head to the links for some exercise and friendly competition. Under the hon. member's proposal, we would be asking Canadians to subsidize initiation fees, membership fees and greens fees. A lot of these courses are exclusive courses and the fees range up to \$10,000 a year. I do not think the Canadian taxpayer would be that enthusiastic if we, the government, allowed a tax credit for those types of fees.

I want to make this clear: The government considers physical activity and sport to be very important to Canadian society. They, as the learned member has already adequately explained, have a very positive effect on individuals and communities. However, there are other personal activities that also lead to the personal betterment of individuals and to the development of healthy, cohesive communities. In engaging in these personal activities, Canadians also face substantial costs.

Let me provide two examples to illustrate that it would not be fair to Canadian consumers to subsidize amateur sport fees. A typical parent with a young daughter wants to encourage that child to be physically active by registering her in a local hockey league. That parent at the same time may also choose to register the same daughter in singing lessons because the child enjoys singing and appears to be talented. Both decisions would support the development of that child and with both decisions the parent would incur costs, but it would not be fair to subsidize one and not the other.

For these reasons and for the reasons I have already alluded to, I hope that the hon. members present would agree that this private member's bill does not fulfill the criteria of effectiveness and fairness, and I would ask all members to think very carefully before supporting the bill.

•(1910)

**Mr. Monte Solberg (Medicine Hat, Canadian Alliance):** Madam Speaker, it is my pleasure to rise and debate Bill C-210. I appreciate the intent of this bill.

The hon. member who prepared this private member's bill had the concerns of parents who must deal with high fees to put their children in sports, and that is a very noble thing. Anybody in this place who is a parent has some sense of how expensive it can be to put children into hockey, soccer, football, or whatever the case is, especially if one has a number of children. Doing it year after year is a very common situation and can cost thousands of dollars. It cost around \$500 to put my son in hockey this year. It is not an insignificant amount of money. It is a lot of money and so I appreciate the intent of the member's private member's bill.

It is a noble thing. But having said that, I am afraid I cannot support it and there are a number of reasons why.

**An hon. member:** Shame.

**Mr. Monte Solberg:** My friend is saying shame with a smile on his face.

It is important to note that there are a number of noble activities that parents support for their children as they are growing up. There are many ways to enrich their lives, keep them off the streets, and give them something that they can accomplish and be proud of.

If one has children who like to dance and wants to put them in ballet, that costs money. If one has children engaged in various kinds of crafts, obviously that can cost money. If one has them in music, that can cost a lot of money. There are all kinds of things that cost money that the children could go into that obviously this bill would not cover.

One of the obvious things is that we do not want to suggest that one activity should be of a higher ranking than another. Sports are a great thing. I participated in sports when I was growing up, my kids have and we support that. However other people make different choices because their children have different interests. We should not have legislation that favours one kind of activity. In doing that we discriminate against other kinds of activities. Frankly, that is what this bill does. For that reason I just cannot support it.

It is important to send the message to the public and to parents that we want to support them in having the money to put their children into all these kinds of activities. That is why the Canadian Alliance does not favour specific tax relief for certain activities that guide people, that says that if they follow our rules they will get a tax break.

We support, and I hope my friend who has moved this motion supports, general tax relief for all Canadians, so if they want to put their children into sports, or if they want to go into music or whatever it is, then by all means they should do that, but a lot of people today do not have the means to do that.



*Private Members' Business*

One thing we proposed in the 2000 election was a \$3,000 per child tax deduction for single income families, single parents, and dual parents. That would put not a few hundred but thousands of dollars into the pockets of families with children under the age of 16. We received tremendous support for that idea in the 2000 election and people were very interested in that. It would demonstrate that the government recognizes the value of raising children and that it is a difficult job.

There is no question that one of the toughest jobs in the world is to raise kids. I am a member of Parliament and many people in this place have had other jobs where they have achieved tremendous things and high status in their professions. But I bet there is not one member who is a parent who has not found, in the middle of all the achievements, that when there is a problem at home with a child, they forget about everything they are doing and all that matters is what is going on with their child. I think we have all had that experience.

● (1915)

What I found, as our children grow up, is that it gets to the point where I would much rather see my children achieve than have some kind of personal glory for something that I have achieved. I think we have all been in that position.

I remember when my oldest scored a goal at a hockey game one time in the playoffs. He dived into the crease and knocked the puck into the net. I think I was happier than he was. I almost jumped on to the ice. I was so excited for him. The game went into overtime and his team lost if I remember correctly, but it was just a wonderful thing.

It is a wonderful thing if parents have the means to support their children to accomplish those kind of things. In this case it was sports. But in other cases it might be a piano recital, or whatever the case may be.

To the member who has proposed this private member's bill, I think it is a noble effort, but it is too narrow and it is shallow. It is too narrow in the sense that it does not cover all the activities. We must remember that the activities children want to engage in are endless. They may have no interest in the arts or sports. It may be computers that interests them. That may be where their talent lies, that is where they get their joy, and that is what they want to do.

In that case, that is where mom and dad, or mom, or dad, or whatever the case may be in that family, may want to devote the money but they do not have the money.

Let us support a tax deduction like the one we proposed in the 2000 election that opens up the ambit of choice for people so we are not limited by whatever the government happens to think of on that day.

One of the great things that I discovered being a member of Parliament is that I have come to appreciate how wonderful families are in the sense that they do so many things that governments could never do and they do them so well, by and large. I am speaking generally here. But by and large, nobody cares more for children than the parents of those children. Let us find ways to give them the means to look after their children.

If we were resourceful and sat down to look at the books of the government, where it spends \$170 billion a year on all kinds of things, we would find all the stuff in there that was wasteful. We would find outcomes that did not achieve what they were supposed to achieve and in some cases were counterproductive or actually harmed the economy. There are things like that. If we were resourceful, I could guarantee that we would find a bunch of savings and we could use those savings to give to parents so that they could provide opportunities for their children.

In some cases it would not even be any of the activities that we talked about. In some cases it would be to send them to university because maybe they are in a situation where they do not have the capacity to do that otherwise. I also want to point out to my friend who proposed this, what if a parent has a disabled child who cannot participate in sports? This bill would discriminate against disabled children. We need to think in much broader terms about how we could help families

I have come to realize, after being here 10 years, that governments cannot decide what is right for families. That is crazy. Do not let the government do it. Let families decide what is right for families, who all have different heritages, traditions, and views about what is right for their children. Sure, there are times when individual families make mistakes, and that is a tragedy. But a much worse tragedy is when the government makes a decision that causes a tragedy for all families.

Let us not try to cure a problem for a small group of people by introducing a solution that would turn out to be a tragedy for a whole bunch of people. Let us find a way, instead, to take this motion, broaden it to include everything, and deepen it so that it would provide a lot more money to families so they can provide for their children in whatever way they see fit.

● (1920)

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Caroline St-Hilaire (Longueuil, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise on Bill C-210, whose purpose is to implement a tax credit for participation in amateur sport.

Straight off, I will tell you that the objective pursued by this bill is quite commendable. As the Bloc Québécois critic for amateur sport, I will always be in favour of the idea of taking various measures to promote physical activity and participation in sport. It is also crucial to promote a better quality of life, better health for our fellow citizens. In this regard, we can only encourage a greater awareness of the benefits of sport and sport activity. A healthy mind in a healthy body is the most eloquent expression of this.

Thus, in the face of it, it is easy to recognize the relevance of this measure, whose purpose is to provide families with more money for participation in sport activities. But what does this really mean?

Although I support the purpose of this tax credit, I am still convinced that this is not an appropriate measure, and I will explain why. What my colleague really wants with this new provision is to reduce the tax burden of families, thus allowing them to afford the sport activities that they want.

*Private Members' Business*

However, I believe that it is not necessarily the families in question that will take advantage of this reduction. And to demonstrate this, I would like to make some comments on tax credits in general.

I am not totally against this kind of measure, quite the contrary. Under certain circumstances, it can be an effective measure. However, with regard to the current debate, I humbly believe that there are many other ways that are much more worthwhile and especially much less costly to achieve our goals.

First, the implementation of a tax credit is sometimes extremely costly for the government, before, during and after. This does not include the administration costs and also the fact that it would take two to three years to calculate the indirect costs, and we would not even be sure that this tax credit would really achieve its objectives, which are to put more money in the pockets of families. Ultimately, this may cost more in expenses than in direct benefits for the taxpayer.

Second, should a family be unable to claim this tax credit, it would still be paying the administration costs with its taxes. It would also pay for the gap between the money that its neighbour is receiving and the shortfall in federal revenues.

So, before supporting such a measure, we must make sure that all alternatives have been considered. If the intention is to provide tax relief to families, this could very easily be done differently and at a much lower cost. The goal is basically to increase the wealth of taxpayers. Why then not increase the basic personal exemption, or the dependent credit or the child tax benefit? Why not simply give a tax cut to those in that particular bracket?

Middle-income families have benefited the least from the tax cuts in recent years. No wonder some of them are having a really hard time paying the fees to participate in sport activities.

These few examples show that tax measures much more appropriate than the ones proposed by my colleague are available.

Other areas of this bill also require our attention. I consider that the bill is not only inappropriate, but also somewhat discriminatory. Why limit the tax credit to sport activities?

How can the government arbitrarily grant a financial benefit for sport activities and not for other activities, such as cultural activities? What about musicians and the outrageous price of some instruments? What about all those who have other equally important and worthwhile interests with respect to their health and well-being?

A brief analysis quickly reveals that the scope of what is being proposed in this bill is much too limited. Besides, it is about time we stop deciding everything for our fellow citizens.

I think that this tendency to want to centralize everything and have the state decide for the taxpayers is becoming less and less acceptable. Personally, I would rather leave more money in their pockets and let them make their own decisions. After all, this is their money; they should get to decide. This is a matter of respect and fairness.

I would also like to touch on some aspects of the bill, particularly in reference to the formula for calculating the credit.

● (1925)

Under the bill, the formula takes into account "...the total of all fees paid by the individual in the year for the individual... to participate in amateur sport". Personally, I think this provision would lend itself to abuse. No limit for the fees is provided. Does it mean that golf club membership fees would be deductible? Because one needs to go to a golf course to participate in that sport. Could I also deduct my \$3,000 new golf clubs? Because without clubs one cannot play golf.

I truly believe that this bill is like giving a blank cheque to the taxpayers and I have a feeling that this measure will mostly benefit the rich. To those who may argue that the regulations will clarify this, I would like to point out that, under the bill, the governor in council may only make regulations prescribing the types of fees that may be deducted. "Types of fees" refer to the eligible activities, not to the amount spent on those activities.

Imagine the risks of such a provision and all the misinterpretations it could lead to.

It would have been wise and logical to establish the maximum amount that can be deducted, as is the case for most other tax credits, or at least to give explicit power to regulate the amount of the fees.

Therefore, for all these reasons, the Bloc Québécois cannot support this legislation, because we are convinced and have shown that, unfortunately, the objective sought in this bill will not be achieved.

The federal government has the key to allowing everyone to breathe easier and to improve their quality of life, whether through sport, leisure activities, art or any other endeavour. For several years now, the government has had surpluses coming out of its ears, and it is our money. Therefore, it has an obligation to return part of these surpluses to those from whom it took that money.

This way, people will be able to decide for themselves what they want to do with this extra money, whether they want to spend it on sport activities, on leisure activities or on anything else. I truly believe that each person should be able to decide what his or her priorities are.

In closing, I would like to congratulate my colleague on his initiative and express to him my respect for the interest he has shown in trying to improve the well-being of families. My disapproval has certainly nothing to do with the principle; it has to do with the process.

I would also like to remind the federal government of its commitment to play a key role in promoting and developing physical activity and sport. It certainly has the means to do it. As for the families, the athletes and all the organizations that are working toward that end, they are greatly in need of it.

● (1930)

[English]

**Mr. Dick Proctor (Palliser, NDP):** Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure for me to say a few words in support of the initiative of my colleague, the member for Sackville—Musquodoboit Valley—Eastern Shore. I will address some of the remarks of the other members in a few moments.

*Private Members' Business*

The bill calls essentially for changes to the Income Tax Act to allow for the deduction of amateur sport fees. It is important to note that the emphasis of the bill is on children. The member has pointed out that with the success of Canada's Olympic bid to host the future games in Vancouver and Whistler, now is the time for the federal government to invest more in our amateur athletes.

Bill C-210 is one way to encourage more young people and families to become involved in amateur sports and to help our struggling amateur athletes. By relieving some of the financial strain on these young athletes, more Canadians will be able to participate.

As the member and others have pointed out, active healthy people help to create a healthier Canada with less pressure on our health care system.

Canadians increasingly understand the advantages of funding amateur sport activities. This bill is one aspect of an overall rethinking on how we can invest in amateur sport and promote healthier living.

There are a number of issues and I think most of them have been covered by the members who have participated in this debate. For example, members have noted the reality about obesity. This is a concern. There used to be Participation in this country because Canadians were deemed to be so much less fit than the Swedes, than a Swedish man 68 years old or some such thing. We have to admit in all candour that we have not been totally successful in that regard.

The member who proposed the bill noted that we have a generation of couch potatoes. He said that they do nothing besides sit and play Nintendo, but they actually do something besides that. They sit and eat while they are playing Nintendo and therein lies the problem.

When I was growing up many decades ago, we did not have the degree of organized sport that there is today. Kids went out to play and they made up their own games. There was a lack of organization. I do not recall anyone of my generation who really got into organized baseball, soccer or hockey until they were 12 or 13 years old. As young people we shovelled off our own ice or played road hockey. Whatever it was that we did, we did it on our own and consequently there were no costs involved.

We have a much different hands on situation now where children are organized at the tender ages of four and five years old. They are organized to play hockey on Saturday well before daylight in rinks and so on. With those realities come expenses. It is much more expensive than it was in my day when my parents kind of turfed my brother and me out the door and on to the street to play sports.

One of the realities is it is much more expensive. The member's bill would allow some of the money that a family pays in income tax to be used to make it more accessible for their youngsters to participate in sports.

The member for Hillsborough chose to focus on the adult part, that this would allow people who wanted to play at exclusive golf courses to have a tax benefit. I want to reiterate, having spoken to the member who has proposed the bill, that the emphasis is very much on youth and trying to get youth involved at an early age, as he said, to encourage a lifelong participation in amateur sport.

● (1935)

The member for Medicine Hat who also spoke eloquently on this topic assumed that the bill could only be for children of the taxpayer. I am not sure why that would need to be the case. Surely an empty nester or someone who has never had children and sees a child in need who would benefit from playing sports could elect to assist that young person by providing some funding for equipment or for an entry fee so that the child could participate in a sports league and develop.

I must say that while watching our own children participate in athletics in Regina where there is a large inner city aboriginal population, my wife and I are constantly struck by the relatively few members of the aboriginal community who actually participate in those group organized sporting activities. One can only assume that the major reason for that is money. Perhaps they come from single family homes or whatever the case may be but there simply is not enough money left over at the end of the month for many of those families to permit their children to go into an athletic event or participate in a team sport.

If this bill were to go through, there would be nothing to prohibit somebody who does not have children who would not benefit otherwise from saying, "This is an important social achievement and I want to help" and to do so in that way. As the member has pointed out, we do allow for donations. We encourage people to participate in the political process by offering generous tax rebates if they pay income tax. We have tax rebates for donations to charitable organizations, for the United Way, Doctors Without Borders and any other number of worthwhile organizations.

The member for Sackville—Musquodoboit Valley—Eastern Shore is saying that there should be consideration given to providing this kind of encouragement so that more children will participate in sporting activities. It would get them off their couches and out into organized activities. The end result would be a healthier society for all of us.

In conclusion, I want to commend the member for Sackville—Musquodoboit Valley—Eastern Shore for putting forward a very thoughtful presentation. It is something I will be happy to support when it comes to a vote in this House.

**Mr. Bryon Wilfert (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I commend the member for his initiative. As a former president of the Canadian Parks and Recreation Association, this is something with which I am very familiar. Obviously, amateur sport plays a very important role in the development of our society and I would indeed say in the development of Canadian identity. It is very important to so many people at the community level.

Clearly, sports contribute to a healthy lifestyle. We talk about healthy lifestyles in the country. It enables Canadians to live healthier and to live longer.

*Adjournment Debate*

In this vein, members will recall the Mills report, which was quite descriptive about the health benefits of sport. Regular physical activity can reduce coronary heart disease, colon cancer and non-insulin dependent diabetes by as much as 50%. Something we often talk about around this chamber is the need for members to stay physically active because so many members are at meetings, are sitting down all the time, living with unhealthy lifestyles, and are grabbing a bite here and there. It is not very good, so this is important.

Sport enhances as we know, national pride, particularly through our elite athletes. They proudly honour our values here and abroad and enrich us all by their courage and their persistence. One only has to remember the immense joy and pride we all felt when our men's and women's hockey team won the gold medal last year in Salt Lake City.

**Mr. Peter Stoffer:** The Canadian women's soccer team.

**Mr. Bryon Wilfert:** Also the Canadian women's soccer team, the hon. colleague mentions. It has gone further than anyone would have expected with great heart and determination.

Sport is also a school of life for young Canadians at a time when in schools we see less stress on physical activity. I do not know, maybe the hon. member really liked gym class. The problem is that so many young people do not and we have seen that often fall by the wayside. That is again where the need is to promote that.

The federal government agrees with the ultimate goal of promotion of participation in sports and we agree with the hon. member. It also believes, though, that there are other ways to achieve the goals of the hon. member other than in Bill C-210.

In fact, while it is well intended, the proposed tax measure would be inefficient, it would provide an unfair advantage to sport activities to the detriment of other activities and it would constitute an inappropriate use of the tax system. While I did not hear the member say the exact amount, clearly it would be very costly.

Let us take a few minutes to look at that.

First, the measures proposed in Bill C-210 would be inefficient and would not have any significant impact on the participation rates in sports, which the hon. member and I agree we would like to see increased. According to recent a Statistics Canada survey, only a negligible portion, 2.3% to be exact, of inactive Canadians believe that costs such as amateur sports fees are a barrier to their participation. Indeed, there seems to be a lack of time or interest as most important in terms of the impediment as to why people do not become active.

Second, the proposal would provide an unfair advantage to sport activities to the detriment of other types of activities. For example, the performing arts, and I am thinking in particular of theatre or orchestra subscriptions, also contribute to Canada's social cohesion and identity. Yet they would not be covered by the proposed tax measure.

Next, implementing this measure would be an inappropriate use of the tax system. Why? Because the general taxpayer would be subsidizing another individual's personal consumption choices. I am sure my hon. colleagues would agree that participation in amateur

sport is a personal choice and that should not be influenced by the tax system. The tax system should remain neutral as to avoid distorting consumption patterns. I am sure my hon. colleague would note that.

Finally, the measures proposed in this bill would be very costly. As the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, I am bound to tell my hon. colleague that we have figured it would be about \$450 million annually to only marginally increase the participation rates, if we accept Statistics Canada's view that 2.3% would be motivated by such legislation. The net result of \$450 million is just not worth it.

● (1940)

However make no mistake. The federal government believes in the many benefits of sport and that is why it continues to do much for the development of amateur sport in Canada. Let me quickly provide some examples.

Where it is appropriate, amateur sport is supported through the tax system. For example, registered Canadian amateur athletic associations do not pay income tax, and I know the member agrees with that. These organizations also can issue tax receipts for donations they receive from individuals.

Further, thanks to our political commitment and succession of strategic investments, Sports Canada's annual grants and contribution budget now stands at \$77 million. From that budget, Sports Canada provides some \$49 million annually to support a wide range of sports organizations that contribute directly to federal sporting objectives.

● (1945)

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos):** The hon. member will have four minutes when we resume debate in the second hour of this motion.

The time provided for the consideration of private member's business has now expired and the order is dropped to the bottom of the order of precedence on the Order Paper.

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## ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 deemed to have been moved.

[English]

### AGRICULTURE

**Mr. Peter Adams (Peterborough, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, as the minister knows, I have been presenting petitions and have asked questions in question period on behalf of beef, sheep, goat, buffalo and other farmers in the Peterborough area. They have been very hard hit by the BSE crisis, but their voices have tended to be drowned out by cries from the west where the crisis hit hard and early.

*Adjournment Debate*

Farmers in my area know that this is not a simple issue. International trade in food has serious health and political implications which result in complex negotiations and rules. However our farmers also know that our systems are safe. They know that we took all possible care in tracing back a single cow that did not get into the food chain. Therefore, they are frustrated that we have only managed to partially open the U.S. and some other borders to our products.

Their primary concern is that the border be fully opened. Only secondary are they interested in compensation issues, important though these are. In their frustration, these farmers want to be kept fully informed about what is being done on their behalf to open the border. This is not idle curiosity. They want to know so they can have real input into the process. After all, as those most affected, they might have useful suggestions to make.

As their MP, I have spoken to the minister and attended rural caucus briefings, including the one at our national caucus in North Bay. Also, as an associate member, I was able to take part in public hearings of the Standing Committee on Agriculture during the summer on BSE. I have attended farm meetings in Peterborough and on Parliament Hill. More recently, in Russia I was able to help prepare the way for our delegation to that country, which is part of our efforts to open up yet another market for our products. The Russians have a special interest in livestock.

As a result, I got a pretty good idea of what the minister, his department and others have been doing, but it is not easy to convey all this to farmers struggling to cope with an industry-threatening crisis. That is why I asked the questions and followed up with a request for this late show debate. I wanted the minister and his parliamentary secretary to speak publicly and in detail about what has been done, what is being done and what will be done to deal with the BSE crisis, especially as it affects Ontario.

I look forward to the parliamentary secretary's reply on behalf of the minister.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Claude Duplain (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I am particularly pleased to take this opportunity to inform the hon. member for Peterborough of the recent results of the initiatives that have been taken to regain access to the market for live ruminants.

As you know, on May 29, 2003, the Department of Agriculture of the United States, which is commonly called USDA, imposed a total embargo on ruminants and products from these animals coming from Canada. This measure resulted from the finding by Canada of a single animal infected with BSE—which is also commonly called mad cow disease. The suspension by the United States of all imports of Canadian ruminants, as an initial precautionary measure, was foreseeable. Indeed, Canada would have reacted in a similar manner, and it has already done so, if one of its trade partners had detected BSE in its animals.

Since then, we have worked actively and vigorously with our American counterparts and those of other countries to have the borders reopened. Efforts have been made at all levels, including meetings between ministers and their counterparts in different

countries, and meetings with the provinces, the United States and the industry.

Members will know that later, on August 8, the United States announced a partial easing of the border security measures banning the Canadian importations. This easing concerned various products, such as boneless meat from beef 30 months old or younger at slaughter. Other products included boneless meat from veal, sheep or goats, beef liver, certain pet foods, the elk meat taken by hunters for personal consumption in wild populations, as well as muskox and caribou.

As we have already said many times, we should not underestimate the importance of this initial step because it is the first time the United States is allowing a product from a country where BSE has been detected to come in the country. May I remind the House that thanks to all those measures, our products have started to cross the border in less than 100 days. This outcome is clearly a tribute to the initiative that the minister and the parliamentary secretary have shown and to the competence and the continued efforts of their respective veterinary services and other officials, on behalf of the Canadian beef industry.

As to the announcement that was made in August, the U.S. secretary has also said that a rule-making process was to be immediately implemented for the importation into the United States of live cattle and their products. A new rule dealing with an animal disease as serious as BSE cannot be taken lightly. The new draft regulation is being prepared and will be published in the U.S. federal register. All stakeholders should be able to comment on the proposed measures. USDA will then analyze all the concerns raised by the stakeholders and give an official answer before publishing the final conditions that will govern the importation of our live cattle by the United States.

• (1950)

[*English*]

**Mr. Peter Adams:** Madam Speaker, I thank the parliamentary secretary for his reply, and I know of his great personal interest in this matter. I am pleased that in these various negotiations with different countries, and I mentioned Russia and I could mention the Philippines, we have been encouraging veterinarians to come to Canada and look at our systems so they can make decisions based on their own observations.

As the parliamentary secretary knows, there is a particular concern in eastern Canada about the opening of the border to live animals. Could he give us some indication of when that might happen?

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Claude Duplain:** Madam Speaker, the minister is in regular contact with the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture on this issue. All those concerned, on either side of the border, are well aware of the urgent need to restore the movement of live animals. The secretary has given the Minister of Agriculture of Canada the assurance that the regulatory process would be expedited.

*Adjournment Debate*

At the same time, the minister is working with other countries to persuade them to lift their ban on live animals. We appreciate the frustration of Canadian producers with the slowness of the process, but they must rest assured that our novel approach is providing hope to our industry.

[*English*]

## THE ENVIRONMENT

**Mrs. Cheryl Gallant (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, Canadian Alliance):** Madam Speaker, I am rising in my place as a result of the lack of response from the Government of Canada over whether or not our nation will be participating in the international thermonuclear experimental reactor, ITER, fusion research project. If anything demonstrates the leadership vacuum that exists in Canada, it has to be the indecision around this project.

It is unfortunate that for crass political manipulation, the Liberal cabinet postponed making a decision from the scheduled September 18 cabinet meeting to October 2, the date of the Ontario provincial election. We still have no decision because the cabinet minister who is supposed to be championing this project, the Minister of Natural Resources, is opposed to it. Canadians will be shocked to learn the true nature of the minister's opposition to this research project.

The actual leader of the Liberal Party, the member for LaSalle—Émard, has ordered all cabinet ministers not to approve any spending items until after the current Prime Minister has been officially removed from office if they want to keep their seat at the cabinet table.

Just like no decision on missile defence means the loss of thousands of jobs, thousands of jobs hang in the balance of this project because no leadership exists in Ottawa to make decisions.

The other fear is that any decisions made by the outgoing regime will be overturned like the verdict to expel, then accept, and now expel the member for Québec East from the Liberal caucus.

Negotiations are taking place right now in Vienna. Every day is critical if Canada wants to participate in the ITER project. Canada is not participating in those discussions because we do not have an offer on the table. At the negotiating sessions the other international parties allowed Canada to sit at the table, but have moved forward on the assumption that there is no offer from Canada.

A decision has to be made this month, and Canada is once again an international laughing stock because this country suffers from a lack of leadership. Our negotiators have no mandate to negotiate because the Government of Canada is suffering from a crisis in leadership that has paralyzed all decision-making.

It was the former Ontario provincial government, with the able direction of Jim Flaherty, MPP for Whitby—Ajax, who provided the leadership on this project. It was the Province of Ontario that first showed leadership by committing \$300 million to the ITER project.

When it was determined that a greater commitment was required, it was the Conservative Government of Ontario that moved forward with a competitive bid. Ironically, the new Premier of Ontario, who has the same political stripe as Ottawa, has endorsed ITER. This is the first test of whether or not there is to be cooperation between Ottawa and Queen's Park.

The ITER project represents a 30 year investment in research and development of \$2.3 billion shared on a fifty-fifty basis between the federal and provincial governments. In the case of the federal government, the ITER project represents a commitment to research and development of less than \$40 million per year.

Considering the fact that the federal government has already wasted \$1 billion on the hated Liberal gun registry and is planning to pour hundreds of millions of dollars more into the black hole of the gun registry, it is clear that this is not a financial decision, but a policy decision. This is not the first time that political expediency has been substituted for sound policy making.

The people of Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke remember, particularly—

• (1955)

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos):** Order, please. The hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources.

**Ms. Nancy Karetak-Lindell (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, ITER is a huge research project to study the engineering feasibility of making fusion energy a reality. Because of its cost, such an undertaking can only be implemented through an international grouping of leading countries in the field of fusion.

The original members were the European Union, the United States, Japan and Russia. The United States withdrew in 1997 but rejoined the project early this year along with China and South Korea.

ITER would take 10 years to build and 20 years to operate. It is not an energy project and no electricity will be produced. It is an experiment.

Since 1995 the Government of Canada has supported the efforts of ITER Canada and its predecessor, the ITER Siting Board, to host the ITER project in Canada. ITER Canada is a non-profit consortium of large construction and engineering firms, financial institutions, labour unions, universities and Ontario Power Generation.

The Government of Canada made a \$3 million contribution to help cover ITER Canada's bid preparation expenses. In mid-2001 the Government of Canada submitted to the other ITER parties ITER Canada's bid to locate the project adjacent to the Darlington nuclear power station in Clarington, Ontario. The government has participated in the international negotiations and provided diplomatic support to the ITER Canada bid.

Under the offer tabled by Canada in 2001 ITER Canada was to provide the site, the infrastructure and the buildings, and assemble the components provided by the other parties. This was to constitute the Canadian contribution during the construction phase. ITER Canada was to finance its contribution to the project through private sector loans. During the operating phase, ITER Canada planned to sell products and services to the project and use the sales revenues to pay back its loans.

The government agreed to submit ITER Canada's bid on the assumption that the Clarington site enjoyed such cost and other advantages over other potential sites that Canada would be selected to host the project without federal financial support. ITER Canada provided assurances that no federal funding support would be required to support the project. The Government of Canada was advised on numerous occasions that the natural and cost advantages of the Clarington site were such that no federal funding would be needed to attract the ITER project to Canada.

Since then, that circumstance has changed. In 2002 both the European Union and Japan tabled their competitive offers to host the project with substantial sovereign government financial commitments. ITER Canada then solicited financial contributions from the Government of Canada in support of the bid process and its involvement.

It is now evident that billions of dollars will be required to support a Canadian bid. Even if the ITER project was located in another country, Canada, as a party to the project, would still be required to contribute approximately a billion dollars to an overseas site.

The other ITER parties consider fusion to be an integral part of their energy policy and have committed significant financial resources to investigate fusion as an energy option. The Government of Canada, on the other hand, took the considered decision in 1995 not to engage in fusion research as it is not a science nor an energy priority—

• (2000)

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos):** Order, please. The hon. member for Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke.

**Mrs. Cheryl Gallant:** Madam Speaker, the people of Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke remember, particularly in the communities of Deep River and Chalk River, the lack of leadership that resulted in no decision to fund the Canada neutron facility.

A deal in principle with a government that has no principle is no deal, and I warn the people of Clarington to demand to see any money promised. The people of Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke

### *Adjournment Debate*

were told they had cabinet approval for the Canadian neutron facility and to this day people in my riding of Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke are asking, where is the money?

It is time that the government proceeded to make a quick decision based upon sound science, due diligence and fiscal responsibility. The technology that could have been developed by the Canadian neutron facility could hold the solution to tomorrow's energy crisis, the science for innovative new materials, and research for medical breakthroughs.

Society does not develop methods of bulk electricity production every decade, or even every quarter of a century. In the future where protecting our environment may become even more critical than it is today, and where global warming—

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos):** Order, please. The hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources.

**Ms. Nancy Karetak-Lindell:** Madam Speaker, in contrast to the other ITER parties, Canada has many other energy options to explore and pursue. These include our rich natural resources and our advancement in nuclear fission, hydro and renewable technologies which we can bring to fruition.

Given these developments, the federal government has been reviewing Canada's participation and will soon decide whether to participate financially in the project. Given Canada's science and energy priorities, the potential benefits and costs of the ITER project to Canada need to be carefully assessed relative to other priorities and competing demands on the government, such as education and health care.

[*Translation*]

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos):** The motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 2 p.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 8:04 p.m.)





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