



CANADA

House of Commons Debates

VOLUME 139 • NUMBER 033 • 3rd SESSION • 37th PARLIAMENT

OFFICIAL REPORT
(HANSARD)

Wednesday, March 31, 2004

—

Speaker: The Honourable Peter Milliken

CONTENTS

(Table of Contents appears at back of this issue.)

All parliamentary publications are available on the
"Parliamentary Internet Parlementaire" at the following address:

<http://www.parl.gc.ca>

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, March 31, 2004

The House met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

• (1400)

[English]

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

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

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[English]

DAVID STRANGWAY

Mr. Peter Adams (Peterborough, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, David Strangway retires as president of the Canada Foundation for Innovation this week. Dr. Strangway is an officer of the Order of Canada, a former president of UBC and a distinguished geologist who worked on moon rocks retrieved by the Apollo missions.

Since 1998, under his leadership, the CFI has transformed the research landscape in Canada. It has helped change research and development in institutions in every province. Some 3,208 projects in 115 institutions in 56 municipalities have benefited from CFI support. Its investments have helped recruit 3,000 new faculty, retain 3,000 more and attract about 9,000 graduate students.

In a very short time Dr. Strangway strengthened institutions large and small, and decentralized research across the country. He helped research institutes, universities and colleges. I particularly appreciate his support of smaller research centres, as well as larger ones, and his recognition of the importance of linkages between such centres.

On behalf of all members, I thank David Strangway for his service to Canada and wish him well with the Sea to Sky University project in Squamish, B.C.

* * *

• (1405)

VOLUNTEER EMERGENCY WORKERS

Mr. Vic Toews (Provencher, CPC): Mr. Speaker, a provincial inquest into the deaths of three Manitoba residents has determined

that many rural Manitoba communities lack an acceptable level of resources to protect residents from the threat of fire. This ruling further underlines the need for the House to consider amendments to the Income Tax Act, such as the proposal to allow volunteer emergency workers to deduct \$3,000 from their taxable income, as the Conservative members of Parliament for Lethbridge and South Shore have long advocated.

This move would not only recognize the importance of volunteer men and women in emergency services and Canada's dependence on their services, but it would go a long way in helping communities attract and retain volunteers. In a small way, it would compensate those courageous individuals for their important service to their community.

* * *

INSURANCE INDUSTRY

Hon. Gurbax Malhi (Bramalea—Gore—Malton—Springdale, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, many people across Canada have found the dramatic increases in insurance premiums to be quite debilitating. According to the Insurance Bureau of Canada, insurance claims costs in Ontario were more than 50% higher during the last quarter of 2000 than during the last quarter of 1999. Last April, Statistics Canada reported that auto and home insurance premiums had risen 26.3% and 6.7% respectively.

In addition, there has been considerable coverage in the media addressing the great increase in the insurance industry's profits, which exceeded \$2.6 billion in 2003. This is calculated to be almost 675% higher than the previous year.

Taking these numbers into consideration, I ask my colleagues in the chamber to become involved in working together federally and provincially in addressing this issue.

* * *

ARTS AND CULTURE

Ms. Sarmite Bulte (Parkdale—High Park, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to inform the House that the Minister of Canadian Heritage has confirmed that the Government of Canada will continue to pursue its efforts in building the capacity of Canadian arts organizations through the renewal of the government's investment in arts and culture, known as "Tomorrow Starts Today", in the new fiscal year. After just three years, we are seeing extremely positive results of this initiative.

S. O. 31

Through this program, the government is awarding an amount exceeding \$9 million this year to qualified arts organizations across the country, matching every dollar raised from the private sector and deposited into an endowment fund. In three years Canada will have invested more than \$20 million for that purpose, which leveraged \$26 million from the private sector.

Together we can ensure that the organizations that contribute so much to the cultural life of our communities have the means to continue to do so.

* * *

USER FEES ACT

Hon. Joe Fontana (London North Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, democratic reform is alive and well in the House of Commons.

Today Bill C-212 will receive royal assent. This bill represents what can be achieved when MPs from all sides of the House and ministers collaborate to help great ideas become good government policy. The bill represents the long and hard work of the Liberal member for Etobicoke North, of whom we should all be proud.

The bill will bring greater transparency, accountability and parliamentary oversight to federal government departments and agencies when they attempt to recover costs through user fees. It will provide greater parliamentary oversight; greater stakeholder participation in the fee setting process; improved links between user fees and performance; and the requirement that a more comprehensive stakeholder impact and competitiveness analysis is done when new user fees, or fee increases, are contemplated.

Who says an individual member of Parliament cannot make a difference in this place?

* * *

GERTRUDE CROSBIE

Mr. Norman Doyle (St. John's East, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the late Gertrude Crosbie of St. John's, who died on Saturday at age 78.

Mrs. Crosbie and her late husband Bill formed a local Cerebral Palsy Association in 1961 and opened Virginia Waters School for Children with Cerebral Palsy in 1968.

Gertrude Crosbie was a tireless volunteer with many causes: CNIB, YWCA, Meals on Wheels, the Newfoundland Historic Parks Association and the Maritime History Archives at Memorial University.

In recognition of her efforts on behalf of the community, Mrs. Crosbie was awarded an honorary doctorate from Memorial University and the Order of Canada.

I am sure all hon. members join me in passing on our condolences to her family and friends and our thanks for a life well lived in the service of her fellow citizens.

●(1410)

WILBERT KEON

Mr. Eugène Bellemare (Ottawa—Orléans, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to salute one of Canada's top visionaries and top cardiologist.

[*Translation*]

Dr. Wilbert Keon is the heart and soul of the University of Ottawa Heart Institute. Dr. Keon saved my life in 1996 when he performed emergency triple bypass surgery on me.

[*English*]

As a surgeon, a senator, a builder and an administrator, he consistently put people first.

Tomorrow, Dr. Keon hands over the reins of the internationally reputed Ottawa Heart Institute. It is a day that he will leave others to continue in his footsteps to continue to build on the research and administration of one of the world's top heart institutes.

[*Translation*]

The heart institute provides extraordinary care to Canadians, and does so in the country's two official languages.

* * *

DIANE DESCÔTEAUX

Ms. Pauline Picard (Drummond, BQ): Mr. Speaker, for Diane Descôteaux, a poet from Bon-Conseil, the past few months have been quite memorable, with 10 of her poems winning awards on the other side of the Atlantic.

To name a few, she received the award of merit for unpublished works, won the Apollon d'or French literary competition, an honourable mention in the 2003 poetry competition, first prize in the classic, neo-classic sonnet category of the *Millen'Arts Journal*, the first Robert-Jolly award from the Société des poètes et artistes de France, and the bronze medal in classic poetry from the Académie européenne des Arts-France.

For 2004, the poet hopes her two new collections will be picked up by a publisher. For the rest, she will continue to write and keep writing for a long time.

I congratulate Diane Descôteaux for her excellent work and for the well-deserved recognition she has been given.

* * *

NEW HORIZONS PROGRAM

Hon. Serge Marcil (Beauharnois—Salaberry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our government recognizes the importance for Canadian communities of the so-called "social economy enterprises". Not only do we recognize the importance of these organizations, we also follow up with concrete action.

Indeed, in the 2004 budget, our government pledged to allocate \$8 million in 2004-05 and \$10 million annually thereafter to the New Horizons Program.

The New Horizons Program provides funding to seniors' groups for various projects that are dear to them. In so doing, it helps maximize the impact of the volunteer work done by our seniors across Canada.

Our country can take great pride in the fact that it can count on a large number of volunteers for whom retirement is not synonymous with inactivity and social disengagement. It is critical that our government support their initiatives.

* * *

[English]

SALVATION ARMY INTERNATIONAL STAFF BAND

Mr. Peter Goldring (Edmonton Centre-East, CPC): Mr. Speaker, today I have the distinct honour of welcoming, on behalf of the Conservative Party of Canada, an elite musical group to Ottawa.

Parliament Hill will soon resound to the resplendent brilliance of brass and stirring percussion of the world renowned Salvation Army International Staff Band.

The band, visiting Parliament Hill from London, England, will entertain and inspire all assembled at 3:15 today on the very steps of our House of Commons.

Formed in October 1891 by Commissioner Bramwell Booth, the band promotes the highest standards of the Salvation Army band excellence and spreads the message of the Christian gospel by presenting the best musical ministry.

I want to congratulate the bandmaster, Stephen Cobb, and all the members of the band who give freely of their time in addition to their commitment to their local church where many are involved in a leadership role.

I want to welcome them to Ottawa.

* * *

KYOTO PROTOCOL

Mrs. Karen Redman (Kitchener Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, a Compas poll of over 500 senior corporate executives found that almost three-quarters of those interviewed in November and December 2002 supported Canada's commitment to the Kyoto protocol. Clearly, these business leaders understand that environmental challenges can be turned to advantage through leadership in green technologies, through more energy efficient transportation and housing, and through non-polluting industrial processes. This will stimulate new innovation, new market opportunities and cleaner communities.

In fact, since we ratified Kyoto, Canada's employment numbers rose by 334,000, the highest employment rate in Canadian history. The dollar rose from 64¢ to the 75¢ range. In the oil patch, drilling levels rose to an all time, high while profits were also at record levels.

Canadians are proving that what makes good sense for the environment is also good for the economy.

●(1415)

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Ms. Alexa McDonough (Halifax, NDP): Mr. Speaker, on April 7 we commemorate the 10th anniversary of the Rwandan genocide. One million men, women and children, entire families, were brutally slaughtered while the world stood by.

Canada must do more to ensure that the world never forgets the Rwandan genocide.

Amnesty International's "Stop Violence Against Women" campaign points out that every day in our world women and girls particularly are assaulted, threatened, raped, mutilated and killed.

That is why the Canadian Committee on Women, Peace and Security, established to advance UN security resolution 1325, is important. It will increase women's participation in conflict prevention, peace processes and peace-building.

Violence against women is a global human rights crisis. We must end the silence that faces these women and girls when they attempt to seek justice, peace and genuine security.

* * *

[Translation]

EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Mr. Gérard Asselin (Charlevoix, BQ): Mr. Speaker, today, we will vote on a motion that I presented and which seeks to create a special status for seasonal workers, regardless of the economic region in which they live. Right now, many families from the North Shore and Charlevoix regions are without any income because the employment insurance program put in place by the Liberal government does not provide support to them.

Despite repeated requests to this effect, the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development is still refusing to meet with officials representing the Sans-Chemise and the Mouvement Action-Chômage, who are in Ottawa today to try once again to explain to the minister that the current situation is cruel and unacceptable for the unemployed, who are starving.

I am urging those hon. members who care about the plight of seasonal workers in their ridings to set aside their political differences and to support this motion, rather than abandoning the unemployed, who need their support more than ever.

In so doing, members will show that they are not complicit with the misappropriation of the employment insurance fund, and they will also show that their decisions are based first and foremost on the people whom they represent.

* * *

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Mr. Clifford Lincoln (Lac-Saint-Louis, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the eighth soccer tournament between pages and members of Parliament was held last night at the Ottawa police centre. The MPs won by a score of 5 to 3.

So far, the MPs have won six times and the pages twice.

Oral Questions

I would like to begin by thanking the hon. member for Sackville—Musquodoboit Valley—Eastern Shore, the outstanding social director of the House of Commons and superlative organizer of the soccer tournament.

[English]

The pages team was led by highly skilled players like Mbimangil, Guillaume, Sabrina and Brent.

We would like all the pages to know how much we appreciate their sense of fun and sportsmanship but, above all, their untiring efforts on our behalf here.

For me it was also a nostalgic event. It was the last time I dragged my ancient bones onto the soccer field on the MPs team. It was also the last time I played defence along with my esteemed friend, the MP for Davenport. Together we represent some 1,000 years of life on this earth, or close to it.

Finally, but not least, Mr. Speaker, your presence was especially welcomed and appreciated. Thank you on behalf of all of us.

* * *

GOVERNMENT APPOINTMENTS

Mr. James Moore (Port Moody—Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this Prime Minister's promise to end the democratic deficit is being abandoned.

Today we learned that the Prime Minister will appoint five Liberal candidates in British Columbia.

Among those the Prime Minister will appoint is former NDP premier, Ujjal Dosanjh, who was a senior cabinet minister in a scandal plagued NDP government that proved so unpopular that, under Dosanjh's leadership, only managed to elect 2 MLAs in the 79 seat B.C. legislature.

If this is the Prime Minister's response to B.C. alienation, he has proven that he, like all Liberals before him, fails to understand British Columbia.

Appointing candidates is precisely the kind of undemocratic elitism that Canadians want to see ended in politics. British Columbians will not be impressed by the Prime Minister's games and will punish the Liberals at the polls in the coming campaign.

However I would like to thank the Prime Minister for giving British Columbians and all Canadians one more reason to vote for the new Conservatives and against the Liberal government.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

• (1420)

[English]

THE PRIME MINISTER

Mr. Stephen Harper (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, before the Prime Minister runs out of town once again, I would like to observe what a disappointment his government has been.

He promised Canadians an ambitious agenda but all we have is empty plans and recycled legislation. Now he wants to bury all the important issues until after the next election, whether it is the judicial inquiry into sponsorship, the Arar inquiry, the gun registry review or his own plans for health care.

After more than a decade of coveting this job, how can the Prime Minister explain his total failure to offer an agenda?

Right Hon. Paul Martin (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, speaking of disappointment, given the fact that the democratic deficit has been so important and that this government has brought in ground-breaking measures time and time again, I would like to ask the Leader of the Opposition if his definition of the way to respond to the democratic need is by asking the chairman of the public accounts committee to systematically obstruct its work.

If it is his idea that the chairman of the public accounts committee should refuse to call witnesses, if the public accounts committee should stall on every major issue, it is not our view.

Mr. Stephen Harper (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I will tell the Prime Minister that in a few weeks he will be asking the questions and I will be sitting where he is.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

The Speaker: Order, please. I know preambles are always popular but we do have to be able to hear the question. The hon. Leader of the Opposition has the floor and we will want to hear the question.

Mr. Stephen Harper: Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister promised to get to the bottom of the sponsorship scandal and instead we see today that he is undermining the chairman while he has been blocking the release of documents, hurrying to get a whitewashed, premature report, and his own public inquiry has not even started yet.

How can the Prime Minister explain his total failure to accept accountability for the sponsorship scandal?

Right Hon. Paul Martin (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with regard to the release of documents, why has the chairman of the public accounts committee refused to allow the testimony of Mr. Guité to be made public? Why did they vote against it yesterday? Why has he refused to call witnesses who are prepared to come? Why has he ridiculed witnesses who have been there? Why has he trampled on civil liberties? Is he doing it on the Leader of the Opposition's instructions?

Mr. Stephen Harper (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the public accounts committee would not have to do it all itself if the Prime Minister were trying to get to the bottom of this scandal.

Let me ask about another failure, the failure to fix the democratic deficit. No real reform at committees, instead the same old games the government is playing with public accounts. The government invoked closure in the House after only six days. There is no reform or election of Senators. He is driving opponents out of his party, appointing candidates and playing with the election date as a personal political football.

How does the Prime Minister explain his total failure to implement even a single, meaningful democratic reform?

Right Hon. Paul Martin (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition is right, the chairman of the public accounts committee is not doing it on his own. He is doing it with the connivance of every other single member of the Alliance Conservatives and sitting in that seat.

The fact is that Canadians want to get to the bottom of this. Liberals want to get to the bottom of the matter but they are being obstructed by the Alliance Conservatives who are afraid of the truth. The fact is we want the parliamentary system to work. We want Parliament and committees to work and the one committee that is being headed up by the Alliance is turning into a farce because its leader will not allow it to function.

• (1425)

Mr. Peter MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister is feeling a little testy today. He has failed miserably to deliver on his previous promises, and yet he is heading full bore into an election.

Full steam ahead for the good ship corruption under this captain. The captain of CSL was active in his own interest, yet the steerage of the ship of state seems to take a back seat.

There is a litany of broken promises under this Prime Minister: no more free votes, no independent ethics counsellor, a widening democratic deficit. Why would Canadians believe a single promise from this Prime Minister today?

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

The Speaker: Order, please. We have to have a little order in the chamber. I do not know how the Prime Minister can hear the question. I cannot. I hope we will have a little order so we can hear the questions and the answers. It is question period, not yelling period.

Right Hon. Paul Martin (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, broken promises; let us take a look at the record in the promise in terms of free votes. The fact is on free votes members of the Liberal Party have voted against Liberal motions. The fact is that if we look at the opposition, they have all voted like robots.

What is really ironic is that member dares to stand up in the House and talk about broken promises—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

The Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member for Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough has the floor.

Mr. Peter MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it must be springtime. It sounds like there are a lot of bulls in rutting season over there.

Oral Questions

The Prime Minister is not going to stand there and lecture me about broken promises, the author of the red book, the man who promised to get rid of the GST, the man who promised—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

The Speaker: Order, please. The caucus meetings this morning must have been very exciting. Perhaps we could all calm down a little so we can hear the questions and the answers. The Speaker cannot hear. Nobody can hear. The hon. member for Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough has the floor for a question. We will forget the rest of the preamble and go to the question.

Mr. Peter MacKay: Mr. Speaker, the captain of CSL seems a bit testy here in the House today about his own record. Talking about broken promises, this is the author of the red book, imagine that.

Canadians have to be asking themselves today: the sultan of Shawinigan or the captain of CSL corruption. I cannot tell the difference. Can you see the difference, Mr. Speaker?

Right Hon. Paul Martin (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is not necessary for me to lecture the hon. member on broken promises. The fact is there is a former Prime Minister of Canada who is relegated off to the corner, whose heart is broken because the great party of Sir John A. Macdonald has had its heart ripped out of it because that hon. member broke his word.

Members do not need my word for it. Ask the Conservative senators in the Senate. Ask the former Prime Minister of Canada why he is sitting over there. He is doing it because that member has no principles.

Some hon. members: Sheila, Sheila.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

• (1430)

The Speaker: Order, please. We will now try to hear a question. The hon. member for Laurier—Sainte-Marie

* * *

[*Translation*]

SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM

Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, on February 18, the Prime Minister stated that he had obtained all the necessary assurances from his ministers about their integrity. Since then, the actions of the President of the Privy Council have been called into question on several occasions. Apparently he was in frequent contact with Pierre Tremblay, the director of the sponsorship program, and interfered in the awarding of a contract to Everest.

Can the Prime Minister tell us whether or not he asked the President of the Privy Council if he exerted pressure in favour of Everest, as was written in black and white in an e-mail dated March 17, 2000?

Right Hon. Paul Martin (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the President of the Privy Council has already told the House that, when he was the Minister of State responsible for Amateur Sport, he had responsibilities, and he talked about them to Mr. Tremblay.

Oral Questions

Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister probably did not understand the question or does not want to understand it. I asked him a question about an e-mail, which stated, “The company I want is Everest”.

Has he already asked him about this? I would like him to answer, instead of making comments about transparency and talking about the democratic deficit that he embodies to a T.

He should stand up and tell the House whether or not he asked the President of the Privy Council, who continued to defend the sponsorships, if in June 2002, he was involved in this scandal like others, such as the Minister of Health did in the HRDC scandal in the past.

Hon. Jacques Saada (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister responsible for Democratic Reform, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, did the Leader of the Bloc Québécois ask the Parti Québécois government to conduct an investigation into the Oxygène 9 scandal? Not once. Did he ask that government to conduct an investigation into the SGF scandal? Not once. Did he ask that government to conduct an investigation into the LeHir and the Conseil de la souveraineté scandals? Not once. The Bloc is in no position to ask questions about integrity.

Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval, BQ): Mr. Speaker, money was stolen to this degree in just one parliament in all of Canada: this Parliament here. And here is where the questions are being asked.

Last week, Huguette Tremblay confirmed before the Standing Committee on Public Accounts that the President of Privy Council was the one with the most contact with Mr. Guité, apart from Alfonso Gagliano.

Has the Prime Minister, who is supposed to have investigated his ministers, asked the President of Privy Council what explanation he had for having been identified as the one with the most contact, apart from—

The Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Government in the House of Commons.

Hon. Jacques Saada (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister responsible for Democratic Reform, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the biggest theft ever has to be Mr. Parizeau's intended use of the \$17 billion he had put aside to achieve the sovereignty Québeckers did not want. In other words, they wanted to take \$18,000 out of the pockets of every Quebec family for something Québeckers did not want. Let them get back to reality in Quebec; they are totally divorced from it.

Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval, BQ): Mr. Speaker, there is a huge difference between financial planning and theft. That is the problem over there. They cannot tell the difference and they pocket our money. They do so shamelessly.

They have taken money from the taxpayers. They have handled sponsorships improperly. They have interfered. The President of Privy Council intervened to get Everest hired. He interfered in the sponsorship program. The President of the Privy Council ought not to be part of the cabinet.

This is my question for the Prime Minister. If he wants to keep his word, is he going to carry out the necessary investigation of his actions?

Hon. Jacques Saada (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister responsible for Democratic Reform, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I wonder how Québeckers can understand the logic of the Bloc Québécois members, who claim to want to get to the bottom of this, but refuse to accept the release of Mr. Guité's report. Although Mr. Guité himself wants the report made public, they refuse. They are speaking out of both sides of their mouths. Either they want the truth and let the report be made public, or they do not want the truth, for political reasons, and face the consequences of that.

* * *

• (1435)

[English]

NATIONAL DEFENCE

Ms. Libby Davies (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is embarrassing to see the boys in the sandbox beating each other up over who has the biggest ego, fighting over political shenanigans, and completely neglecting the real issues that concern Canadians.

I would like to bring to the Prime Minister's attention that today leading NGOs released a poll showing that 69% of Canadians do not want Canada to participate in star wars missile defence. Instead, Canadians want Canada to be a leader in the world for peacekeeping, yet the Liberals continue to be completely off track in pursuing missile defence.

After months of talk, is the Prime Minister not aware—

The Speaker: The right hon. Prime Minister.

Right Hon. Paul Martin (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the government has made it very clear that we have no intention of participating in star wars. We are against the weaponization of space. That is the government's position and it is one to which we will stick.

Whether it is the troops that we have sent to Haiti in order to maintain the peace, or whether it is the capacity building, the institution building that we are looking at in Haiti and in Afghanistan along with our troops, or whether it is the very active role that we have played in Africa and will continue to play, this government does understand that a country like Canada has very important responsibilities outside of its border.

Ms. Libby Davies (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I repeat that the government and the Prime Minister are completely off track. If he knows anything about star wars, he knows that there are plans already to put 304 interceptors in place. The company behind that is Lockheed Martin, which is doing our census.

Does the Prime Minister think that the former prime minister did the right thing in giving our census to Lockheed Martin, the largest munitions company in the world? If that were the wrong decision, is he willing to cancel that contract and bring it back to Canada?

Oral Questions

Hon. Stephen Owen (Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the census was awarded to Lockheed Martin Canada after a competitive competition with all of the safeguards that would be in place with whichever company was engaged to provide this service.

Members opposite can be assured that the private information of Canadians will be totally secure and that value for money will be received through a competitive process with a Canadian-based company.

* * *

SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM

Mrs. Diane Ablonczy (Calgary—Nose Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, on March 17 the Prime Minister informed the Quebec City Chamber of Commerce, “And I can promise that any hint of abuse will be swiftly investigated”, yet his judicial inquiry will not get going until September.

His Liberal majority on the parliamentary committee has blocked production of the Gagliano papers. To divert attention from this gross interference with a full investigation, Liberals have now been instructed to attack the committee chair.

Why does the Prime Minister make public promises only to betray them?

Hon. Stephen Owen (Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the government has taken unprecedented action and put into place processes unknown in Canadian history, from the release of cabinet documents and confidences, to the setting up of a public inquiry, to participating in the public accounts, to appointing a special counsel for financial recovery, to internal audits, to forensic audits, to referrals to the RCMP, and to referrals to the Auditor General.

The only process that is not working, because of the intransigence of members opposite and their chair, is the public accounts committee in refusing to allow the testimony of Chuck Guité to become public.

Mrs. Diane Ablonczy (Calgary—Nose Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals control every committee of the House because they have a majority on every committee of the House. Guess who huddles with the Liberal majority during breaks at the committee studying the sponsorship program? The Prime Minister's own assistants, that is who, giving Liberal members their marching orders. His personal media spokesperson is out in front of the cameras after committee, giving the media the PM's own spin.

Why is the Prime Minister trying to discredit the committee chair, when the truth is the Liberal majority is being orchestrated by the Prime Minister himself?

Hon. Stephen Owen (Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, no one on this side is discrediting the work of the public accounts committee. People on this side have just simply suggested that if members opposite and members of the public accounts committee, chaired by an hon. member opposite, would like to release the documents, they can with the full respect of this side particularly, and starting with Chuck Guité's in camera testimony.

• (1440)

Mr. Jason Kenney (Calgary Southeast, CPC): Mr. Speaker, what is unknown in Canadian history is this level of corruption from a government. We want to get to the bottom of it.

How dare the Prime Minister try to use the old Liberal tactic of deflecting, as though the chair of the public accounts committee were guilty of the stolen millions. It was Liberals and Liberal friends.

Why are they trying to smear the chairman of the public accounts committee? Why are they trying to shut down the public accounts inquiry before we get to the bottom of this?

Hon. Stephen Owen (Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, no one on this side of the House is attempting to smear the chair of the public accounts committee. The word “smear” does come to mind, though, when we hear from the chair of the public accounts committee the other day that he would not be satisfied until he sees people in jail. For the chair of a fact finding process to treat—

An hon. member: Without due process.

Hon. Stephen Owen: For the chair of the public accounts committee or any committee of the House or any process that the House is involved with to prejudge an issue and to then pretend it is still a fact finding exercise—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Calgary Southeast.

Mr. Jason Kenney (Calgary Southeast, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have news for this minister: Canadians will not be satisfied until they see people taken to jail for stealing from the public treasury.

Why is it that the Liberals on the committee do not want us to have the opportunity to question Chuck Guité in person, live, before going to the polls? We will release his testimony the day he comes before the committee to tell the truth and to answer questions. Why the cover-up? Why do they not want us to get to the bottom of—

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Public Works and Government Services.

Hon. Stephen Owen (Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, members on this side are very anxious and certainly the government is trying in every way possible to get to the bottom and the truth of this matter, to hold those who are responsible to account, and to ensure that it never happens again. It is an unprecedented series of processes in place to ensure that.

If we are talking about guilt and jail and financial recovery, then let us look to the civil processes that have been set up. Let us look to the RCMP investigations. If there is evidence of wrongdoing that should send one to jail, surely we would want to involve the RCMP.

Oral Questions

[Translation]

HEALTH

Mr. Réal Ménard (Hochelaga—Maisonneuve, BQ): Mr. Speaker, it is obvious that the federal contribution to health care funding is clearly insufficient. We also know that Ottawa imposes more restrictions on Quebec today than it did when it was paying a larger share of the bill.

Will the Minister of Health admit that the federal government has not only reduced its funding of the health system, but it has also created more bureaucracy by adding more red tape?

Hon. Pierre Pettigrew (Minister of Health, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister responsible for Official Languages, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what Canadians are interested in is knowing what our government is prepared to do, in partnership with the provinces, to find long-term solutions. What we need is a plan.

Yesterday, I heard the Quebec Minister of Finance say that, in fact, it was not just a question of funding for health, but that reforms were needed. That was the Quebec Minister of Finance who said that yesterday, when presenting his own budget.

We agree that we must work together and develop a plan with practical and lasting solutions.

Mr. Réal Ménard (Hochelaga—Maisonneuve, BQ): Mr. Speaker, what the Liberal health minister of Quebec said in the National Assembly was that there is no new money for health.

My question is for the Minister of Health. Can he give a yes or no answer to the people of Quebec? Does his budget include new money for health? That is not what the Liberal finance minister said in the National Assembly.

Hon. Pierre Pettigrew (Minister of Health, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister responsible for Official Languages, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there was \$2 billion for the health care system in the budget presented by the Minister of Finance last week. There was \$665 million for the Canada public health agency, including \$400 million for better vaccination programs that will be backed up by the provinces.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

An hon. member: Stop your yapping.

Hon. Pierre Pettigrew: We understand very well. The hon. member for Rimouski—Neigette-et-la Mitis explained it very well the other day. She said that the Bloc is a watchdog; it is there to bark. It can bark, but we are working toward practical solutions. We want to avoid having Quebecers sleeping in the doghouse. We invite the people of Quebec inside the house with the masters of the house.

* * *

• (1445)

THE BUDGET

Mr. Pierre Paquette (Joliette, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the budget brought down by Quebec's Minister of Finance is a convincing illustration of the impact on Quebec's public finances of the fiscal imbalance between the federal government, the provinces and Quebec.

Will the Minister of Finance admit that his recent budget has had a harmful effect on the finances of Quebec and the provinces, as Yves Séguin has said? That is the truth.

[English]

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased that Quebec's budget documents show that equalization changes flow not from cuts from the federal government but from the functioning of the existing formula. I am pleased that Quebec has acknowledged federal assistance and flexibility in managing equalization going forward, and I am pleased that Quebec has been able to increase its spending, cut its taxes and declare 2003-04 in balance.

[Translation]

Mr. Pierre Paquette (Joliette, BQ): Mr. Speaker, it is true that equalization reform was announced in the recent federal budget, but according to Mr. Séguin—and this is also true—the shortfalls Quebec has been denouncing for 20 years are unfortunately still present.

Is the Minister of Finance aware that the changes unilaterally imposed on the provinces and Quebec will cause further deterioration in the public finances of the provinces and Quebec?

[English]

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, for its own accounting purposes, Quebec decided to book a certain number of federal funds that would flow for health care over a number of years in one year. Having done that in one year, it created a shortfall the next year and it asked us for five different things to smooth over the shortfall. We agreed to one, two, three, four and five, and we offered the same thing to all of the rest of the provinces as well.

* * *

GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURES

Mr. Monte Solberg (Medicine Hat, CPC): Mr. Speaker, in 1995 the Prime Minister told the House in his budget speech, "The government has just introduced a new and much tighter system to manage its spending". Gee, I wonder how that is working out.

We know that the Prime Minister does not want to be associated with the Liberal government of the past 10 years, but he has a past and it ain't pretty. Given the firearms registry, the Challenger jets debacle, the HR boondoggle and \$100 million for Liberal friends in the sponsorship scandal, what has happened to his tighter system to manage spending?

Right Hon. Paul Martin (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am actually delighted to talk about the past. I am delighted to talk about the 1995 budget. That was the budget that set in place the measures that eliminated the \$42 billion deficit rung up by their predecessors. That is the budget that led to a \$100 billion tax cut for middle income and low income Canadians. That is the budget that today makes Canada the only member of the G-8 that is in surplus. I am very proud of that past.

Oral Questions

Mr. Monte Solberg (Medicine Hat, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it sounds like he is a big fan of Jean Chrétien after all.

Mr. Speaker, 1995 was the year that he made the deepest cuts to public health care in Canadian history, and 1995 was the year that he brought in the sponsorship program. Under this Prime Minister, 1995 was not a good year for Canadians.

Why did the Prime Minister brag in previous budget speeches about how he would eliminate waste and then refuse to take responsibility for the sponsorship scandal? Why did he do it?

Right Hon. Paul Martin (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I remember that debate very well. It was in that debate that the member's party stood up after the 1995 budget and said that substantially greater cuts should be made in every area. His party called for massive cuts in health care. His party called for massive cuts in education. His party said that the environment was an area that the federal government should not be involved in.

His party stood up and said that every one of the Canadian values should be shredded. We said they would not be. We said we would stand up for Canada.

* * *

• (1450)

THE BUDGET

Mr. James Moore (Port Moody—Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam, CPC): Mr. Speaker, what we wanted to see cut was \$161 million in corporate welfare that went to the Prime Minister's own company. That is what we wanted cut.

In nine budgets over 10 years, the government failed to put gas taxes into roads. Then the Prime Minister quit the cabinet in a snit and went off to the Union of B.C. Municipalities and said, "...we are going to provide Canadian municipalities with a portion of the...gas tax".

Last week he failed to keep his promise. Why should Canadians trust the Prime Minister when he betrayed such a fundamental promise of his leadership campaign?

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, perhaps instead of listening to the opposition Canadians are listening to the Federation of Canadian Municipalities. The president of that organization said the budget delivered exactly what they had asked for. The mayor of Toronto said the budget had delivered exactly what they expected. The mayor of Regina said it had delivered exactly what they expected. Just this week, delivering on our commitments, we were in Toronto delivering \$1 billion, in partnership with the province and the city, for urban transit.

Mr. James Moore (Port Moody—Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam, CPC): Mr. Speaker, on October 7 of last year, the House passed and the Prime Minister voted in favour of our motion calling on the government to "initiate immediate discussions with the provinces and territories to provide municipalities with a portion of the federal gas tax".

The Prime Minister has failed to keep that commitment. He has failed to keep his campaign commitment of putting gas taxes into roads on a permanent, sustainable basis. If the Prime Minister will not keep such a high profile promise, the number one policy priority

of his leadership campaign, if he will not keep his word, how should Canadians trust him? Why should Canadians trust him on anything else he has to say?

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the first step in the new deal for communities was to deliver the GST rebate of \$7 billion over the next 10 years. It was done, with legislation before the House to make it happen. Next we said we would accelerate existing infrastructure programs. In the budget it was done, with the timing cut from 10 years to 5 years.

The next thing we said we would do is sit down with the provinces to talk about the gas tax. That is indeed the next thing on the agenda and I am anxious to have that conversation with all of the provinces, along with conversations on health care and equalization.

* * *

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Mr. Pat O'Brien (London—Fanshawe, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there are serious allegations that anti-Christian persecutions are being carried out by police and soldiers in the Lai Chau province of Vietnam. These reported persecutions are apparently aimed at having Vietnamese Christians recant their faith and abandon their Christian religious practices.

Could the Minister of Foreign Affairs comment on the accuracy of these allegations and outline what actions Canada has taken or will take to protest these persecutions?

Hon. Dan McTeague (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the hon. member for his question, as we know how deeply committed he is to raising the concerns of his constituents on the floor of the House of Commons. The government is of course aware of the reports of religious persecution in Vietnam, including those in the province of Lai Chau. Indeed, our embassy in Hanoi has been extremely involved with this.

The government raised this issue with the Vietnamese foreign affairs minister last year. I want to assure the hon. member and members of the House that last week on March 25 we said in our country's statement that we encourage Vietnam to stop the detention of citizens for their political and religious views and to allow greater freedom of speech and association.

* * *

CANADA ELECTIONS ACT

Hon. Lorne Nystrom (Regina—Qu'Appelle, NDP): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the right hon. Prime Minister. The Law Commission of Canada is issuing a report today that calls for the ending of our first past the post electoral system and bringing in a mixed member proportional system similar to Germany's and New Zealand's. This commission is a highly respected organization.

Oral Questions

I want to ask the Prime Minister whether or not he will now stop talking big and acting small when it comes to democracy and act on this report, because I hear a rumour that he may be considering calling an election. If there is no election, would he consider putting a referendum question to the Canadian people to ask whether or not they want to have a referendum on changing our electoral system?

• (1455)

Hon. Irwin Cotler (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is correct. The Law Commission is a respected body. It has produced a serious report and we will give it the consideration it deserves.

* * *

[Translation]

EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Mr. Yvon Godin (Acadie—Bathurst, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Daniel Giguère, a Liberal candidate, and other candidates from the Charlevoix region have formed a committee to review the changes to employment insurance after the Prime Minister said that he was prepared to conduct a review of seasonal work. After years of inaction on employment insurance, now on the eve of an election, the government is making announcements.

My question is for the Prime Minister. When is he going to stop using the unemployed and the needy for electoral gain?

Hon. Joseph Volpe (Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have already said many times in this House that the Prime Minister and the government are very concerned about the issue of seasonal workers.

We have already started working on finding a long-term solution. In the past, we have taken short-term measures to address local problems by working with the provinces and regional and community authorities.

Therefore I am sure that the solution—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Provencher.

* * *

[English]

SUPREME COURT OF CANADA

Mr. Vic Toews (Provencher, CPC): Mr. Speaker, while the Prime Minister was busy avoiding Canadian taxes in Barbados, he was also telling Canadians he had a better way of appointing Supreme Court of Canada judges. However, since becoming Prime Minister, he has failed to put forward any new ideas about appointing judges.

It is clear he was able to avoid paying personal income taxes because of his offshore havens. What about a better justice system for Canada?

Hon. Irwin Cotler (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister affirmed that there would be a parliamentary review of Supreme Court appointments. The Prime Minister has fulfilled this commitment and the justice committee is now seized with this issue.

Mr. Vic Toews (Provencher, CPC): Mr. Speaker, that is just another smoke screen. One thing is clear. When it comes to the

appointment of judges, it is who one knows in the PMO rather than what one knows.

The Prime Minister was able to plan his personal wealth by ripping off Canadian taxpayers. Does he have any explanation for—

The Speaker: The question is out of order.

The hon. member for Crowfoot.

* * *

NATIONAL SECURITY

Mr. Kevin Sorenson (Crowfoot, CPC): Mr. Speaker, for a decade the Prime Minister has been part of a government that has failed to effectively protect Canadians.

In her report the Auditor General found major deficiencies in inter-agency cooperation and a lack of coordination of intelligence management. These were the same problems that the Auditor General found in 1996, eight years ago.

Why, after a decade of neglect and a decade of failure, should Canadians trust the Prime Minister with the security of our nation?

Hon. Anne McLellan (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is this Prime Minister who on December 12 created a new Department of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness. It is this Prime Minister who created for the first time a new position of national security advisor. It is this Prime Minister who is going to create a new committee of parliamentarians to deal with questions of national security.

In fact, there is no one more committed to the safety and security of Canadians than this Prime Minister.

Mr. Kevin Sorenson (Crowfoot, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the minister can boast all she wants about the belated creation of the department of national security. The reality is that it is too little, too late.

The fact remains that this Prime Minister was part of a government that failed to fulfill its fundamental role which is the protection of its citizens.

The Auditor General stated that it will take years to rectify. We do not have years. We are named as a terrorist target today. Check the headlines today.

The Prime Minister has repeatedly failed Canadians. Why should we trust the Prime Minister again?

Hon. Anne McLellan (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, far from failing Canadians in relation to safety and security, I guess the hon. member forgets that as finance minister the Prime Minister committed \$7.7 billion in the fall of 2001 to help enhance the safety and security of Canadians.

The hon. member refers to Canada being a named country. I want to reassure Canadians that the naming of Canada as a target is not new news. Osama bin Laden did that some 18 months ago. In fact, there are no specific—

Oral Questions

•(1500)

The Speaker: The hon. member for Beauport—Montmorency—Côte-de-Beaupré—Île-d'Orléans

* * *

[Translation]

EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Mr. Michel Guimond (Beauport—Montmorency—Côte-de-Beaupré—Île-d'Orléans, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my colleague from Charlevoix has introduced a motion to establish specific status for seasonal workers, regardless of the economic region in which they live. Many promises have been made to workers in the past. For instance, the Prime Minister got front page coverage of his visit to Baie-Saint-Paul on June 11, 2003, for his reported commitment to solve the problem of the Sans-chemise.

In order to avoid leaving these workers high and dry with unfulfilled promises, does the Prime Minister intend to vote in favour of the motion on which we are going to vote this afternoon?

Hon. Joseph Volpe (Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, programs have been implemented to solve the problem of the Sans-chemise and the unemployed. For instance, we already have made over \$600 million available to the provincial government to resolve this problem.

We have made an additional \$450 million available to the provincial governments for this purpose. We have also made another \$77 million available to resolve this—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Beauport—Montmorency—Côte-de-Beaupré—Île-d'Orléans.

Mr. Michel Guimond (Beauport—Montmorency—Côte-de-Beaupré—Île-d'Orléans, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister had a lot more to say at Baie-Saint-Paul on June 11, 2003. Now he does not want to stand up.

My question is for this heartless government, which has done everything possible to impoverish workers. Does it realize that seasonal workers are spiralling into poverty and one of the ways to put an end to that process is to acknowledge their specific status by voting in favour of the motion of the hon. member for Charlevoix?

Hon. Joseph Volpe (Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, perhaps the hon. member did not understand: the Prime Minister has already created a task force to examine this situation and come up with long-term solutions to it. There are, moreover, men and women, members of all parties in this House, who are aware of the problem. We will be presenting long-term solutions. When recommendations are presented, I am prepared to—

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

* * *

[English]

AGRICULTURE

Mr. Gerry Ritz (Battlefords—Lloydminster, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it turns out that the Prime Minister's so called 100 days of action have really been all hype and no substance. Let me be clear: 21

regurgitated bills; invoking closure in record time, even for a Liberal; and whipped votes on the gun registry in the first month.

What he has not done is resolve the crisis in the livestock industry which has dragged on for over 10 months. Could the Prime Minister tell us why he refuses to do his job and go to Washington?

Hon. Bob Speller (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am surprised the hon. member has finally asked a question on this, rather than asking all these other questions when he has had an opportunity. He has not done so, I am sure, because he knows the Prime Minister is heavily involved in this issue.

He has spoken with the President. We have spoken with the different provinces and with the premiers, who have also gone to Washington. We have a coordinated group within Canada that is working very hard on this issue and we are making progress.

Mr. Gerry Ritz (Battlefords—Lloydminster, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister's legacy will be very clear. Let us run down the list: a crisis in national security, a crisis in infrastructure, a crisis in health care, a crisis in agriculture, and a crisis in the lumber industry. This is all pretty damning stuff.

They have all been bubbling for years under the former finance minister as he did his clear eye for the Grit guy leadership make-over.

When will the Prime Minister drop this pretense that he actually knows what he is doing?

Hon. Bob Speller (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member forgot to mention the crisis in the opposition. In fact, the opposition is not addressing the issues that Canadians want them to address.

We have taken agriculture very seriously, the area that the member is responsible for. We have consulted with Canadians, we have worked with the cattle industry, and we have brought forward a program of close to \$1 billion to help address their needs.

•(1505)

The Speaker: That will bring to a conclusion the question period for today. Hon. members will know very well why there were so few questions.

* * *

PRESENCE IN GALLERY

The Speaker: I would like to draw the attention of hon. members to the presence in the gallery of the Hon. Geoff Plant, Attorney General and Minister Responsible for Treaty Negotiations for British Columbia.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

* * *

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

The Speaker: I have the honour to inform the House that messages have been received from the Senate informing this House that the Senate has passed the following bills: Bill C-27 and Bill C-260 without amendment.

*The Budget***THE ROYAL ASSENT***[English]*

The Speaker: I have the honour to inform the House that a communication has been received as follows:

Government House
Ottawa

March 31, 2004

Mr. Speaker:

I have the honour to inform you that the Rt. Hon. Adrienne Clarkson, Governor General of Canada, will proceed to the Senate chamber today, the 31st day of March, 2004, at 3:45 p.m., for the purpose of giving royal assent to certain bills.

Yours sincerely,

Barbara Uteck
Secretary to the Governor General

GOVERNMENT ORDERS*[English]***THE BUDGET**

FINANCIAL STATEMENT OF MINISTER OF FINANCE

The House resumed from March 30 consideration of the motion that this House approves in general the budgetary policy of the government.

The Speaker: It being 3:07 p.m., pursuant to order made on Tuesday, March 30, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on ways and means motion No. 1.

Call in the members.

• (1515)

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

*(Division No. 39)***YEAS**

Members

Adams	Alcock
Anderson (Victoria)	Assad
Assadourian	Augustine
Bakopanos	Barnes (London West)
Barrette	Beaumier
Bélaïr	Bélangier
Bellemare	Bennett
Bertrand	Bevilacqua
Binet	Blondin-Andrew
Bonin	Bonwick
Bradshaw	Brison
Brown	Bulte
Byrne	Calder
Cannis	Castonguay
Catterall	Cauchon
Chamberlain	Charbonneau
Coderre	Comuzzi
Cotler	Cullen
Cuzner	DeVillers
Dion	Discepolo
Dromisky	Drouin
Duplain	Efford
Eggleton	Eyking
Farrar	Folco
Fontana	Frulla
Fry	Galloway
Godfrey	Goodale
Grose	Guarnieri

Harvard	Harvey
Herron	Hubbard
Ianno	Jackson
Jennings	Jobin
Jordan	Karetak-Lindell
Karygiannis	Keyes
Kilger (Stormont—Dundas—Charlottenburgh)	Kilgour (Edmonton Southeast)
Knutson	Kraft Sloan
Laliberte	Lancôt
Lastewka	LeBlanc
Lee	Lincoln
Longfield	MacAulay
Macklin	Mahoney
Malhi	Maloney
Marcil	Marleau
Martin (LaSalle—Émard)	Matthews
McCallum	McCormick
McGuire	McKay (Scarborough East)
McLellan	McTeague
Mills (Toronto—Danforth)	Minna
Mitchell	Murphy
Myers	Nault
Neville	Normand
O'Brien (London—Fanshawe)	O'Reilly
Owen	Pacetti
Pagtakhan	Paradis
Parrish	Patry
Peric	Peschisolido
Peterson	Pettigrew
Phinney	Pickard (Chatham—Kent Essex)
Pratt	Price
Proulx	Provenzano
Redman	Reed (Halton)
Regan	Robillard
Saada	Savoy
Scherrer	Scott
Sgro	Shepherd
Simard	Speller
St-Jacques	St-Julien
St. Denis	Stewart
Szabo	Telegdi
Thibault (West Nova)	Thibeault (Saint-Lambert)
Tirabassi	Tonks
Torsney	Ur
Valeri	Vanclief
Volpe	Wappel
Whelan	Wilfert
Wood— 151	

NAYS

Members

Ablonczy
Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands)
Bachand (Saint-Jean)
Benoit
Bigras
Breitkreuz
Cardin
Casson
Clark
Cummins
Davies
Desjarlais
Doyle
Duncan
Epp
Forseth
Gagnon (Lac-Saint-Jean—Saguenay)
Gallant
Gauthier
Godin
Grey
Guimond
Hearn
Jaffer
Keddy (South Shore)
Laframboise
Lill
Lunn (Saanich—Gulf Islands)
MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough)
Mark
Masse

The Budget

McDonough	McNally
Ménard	Meredith
Merrifield	Mills (Red Deer)
Moore	Nystrom
Pallister	Paquette
Penson	Perron
Picard (Drummond)	Plamondon
Proctor	Rajotte
Reid (Lanark—Carleton)	Reynolds
Ritz	Rocheleau
Roy	Schellenberger
Schmidt	Skelton
Solberg	Sorenson
St-Hilaire	Stinson
Stoffier	Strahl
Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest)	Toews
Tremblay	Wasylycia-Leis
Wayne	White (North Vancouver)
Williams	Yelich— 100

PAIRED

Members

Boudria	Crête
Fournier	Graham
Leung	Sauvageau— 6

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

Mr. Myron Thompson: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, before the vote I understood there was going to be a 15 minute bell. I guess I missed that idea, but I want you to know if I had been here, I would have voted against this awful bill.

● (1520)

The Speaker: I thank the hon. member for that clarification.

* * *

[*Translation*]

WAYS AND MEANS

MOTION NO. 7

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Finance, Lib.) moved that a ways and means motion, tabled on March 29, to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on March 23, 2004, be concurred in.

The Speaker: Pursuant to the order made on Tuesday, March 30, 2004, the House will now proceed to the taking of the recorded division on Motion No. 7, under ways and means proceedings.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

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

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Speaker: All those opposed to the motion will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Speaker: In my opinion, the yeas have it.

And more than five members having risen:

● (1530)

(The House divided on Motion No. 7, which was agreed to on the following division:)

(*Division No. 40*)

YEAS

Members

Adams	Alcock
Allard	Anderson (Victoria)
Assad	Assadourian
Asselin	Augustine
Bachand (Saint-Jean)	Bakopanos
Barnes (London West)	Barrette
Beaumier	Bélaïr
Bélangier	Bellemare
Bennett	Bergeron
Bertrand	Bevilacqua
Bigras	Binet
Blondin-Andrew	Bonin
Bonwick	Bourgeois
Bradshaw	Brisson
Brown	Bulte
Byrne	Calder
Cannis	Cardin
Castonguay	Catterall
Cauchon	Chamberlain
Charbonneau	Clark
Coderre	Comartin
Comuzzi	Cotler
Cullen	Cuzner
Dalphond-Guiral	Davies
Desrochers	DeVillers
Dion	Discepola
Dromisky	Drouin
Duceppe	Duplain
Efford	Eggleton
Eyking	Farrah
Folco	Fontana
Frulla	Fry
Gagnon (Québec)	Gagnon (Lac-Saint-Jean—Saguenay)
Gagnon (Champlain)	Galloway
Gaudet	Gauthier
Girard-Bujold	Godfrey
Godin	Goodale
Grose	Guarnieri
Guay	Guimond
Harvard	Harvey
Herron	Hubbard
Ianno	Jackson
Jennings	Jobin
Jordan	Karetak-Lindell
Karygiannis	Keyes
Kilger (Stormont—Dundas—Charlottenburgh)	Kilgour (Edmonton Southeast)
Knutson	Kraft Sloan
Laframboise	Laliberte
Lalonde	Lancôt
Lastewka	LeBlanc
Lee	Lill
Lincoln	Longfield
Loubier	MacAulay
Macklin	Mahoney
Malhi	Maloney
Marceau	Marcil
Marleau	Martin (LaSalle—Émard)
Martin (Winnipeg Centre)	Masse
Matthews	McCallum
McCormick	McDonough
McGuire	McKay (Scarborough East)
McLellan	McTeague
Ménard	Mills (Toronto—Danforth)
Minna	Mitchell
Murphy	Myers
Nault	Neville
Normand	Nystrom
O'Brien (Labrador)	O'Brien (London—Fanshawe)
O'Reilly	Owen
Pacetti	Pagtakhan

The Budget

Paquette	Paradis
Parrish	Patry
Peric	Perron
Peschisolido	Peterson
Pettigrew	Phinney
Picard (Drummond)	Pickard (Chatham—Kent Essex)
Plamondon	Pratt
Price	Proctor
Proulx	Provenzano
Redman	Reed (Halton)
Regan	Robillard
Rocheleau	Roy
Saada	Savoy
Scherrer	Scott
Sgro	Shepherd
Simard	Speller
St-Hilaire	St-Jacques
St-Julien	St. Denis
Stewart	Stoffer
Szabo	Telegdi
Thibeault (Saint-Lambert)	Tirabassi
Tonks	Torsney
Tremblay	Ur
Valeri	Vanclief
Volpe	Wappel
Wasylcia-Leis	Whelan
Wilfert	Wood— 194

NAYS

Members

Abbott	Ablonczy
Anders	Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands)
Barnes (Gander—Grand Falls)	Benoit
Breitkreuz	Burton
Casey	Casson
Chatters	Cummins
Day	Doyle
Duncan	Elley
Epp	Fitzpatrick
Forseth	Gallant
Goldring	Grewal
Grey	Hanger
Hearn	Hill (Prince George—Peace River)
Jaffer	Johnston
Keddy (South Shore)	Lunn (Saanich—Gulf Islands)
Lunney (Nanaimo—Alberni)	Mackay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough)
Mark	McNally
Meredith	Merrifield
Mills (Red Deer)	Moore
Pallister	Penson
Rajotte	Reid (Lanark—Carleton)
Ritz	Schellenberger
Schmidt	Solberg
Sorenson	Stinson
Strahl	Thompson (Wild Rose)
Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest)	Toews
Wayne	White (North Vancouver)
Yelich— 55	

PAIRED

Members

Boudria	Crête
Fournier	Graham
Leung	Sauvageau— 6

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

MOTION NO. 8

Hon. Andy Mitchell (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Lib.) moved that a ways and means motion to introduce an act to give effect to a land claims and self-government agreement among the Tlicho, the Government of the Northwest Territories and the Government of Canada, to make related amendments to the Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act

and to make consequential amendments to other acts, tabled in the House on March 30, 2004, be concurred in.

The Speaker: Pursuant to the order made on Tuesday, March 30, the House will now proceed to the taking of the recorded division on Motion No. 8, under ways and means proceedings.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

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

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Speaker: All those opposed to the motion will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Speaker: In my opinion, the yeas have it.

And more than five members having risen:

• (1540)

(The House divided on Motion No. 8, which was agreed to on the following division:)

(Division No. 41)

YEAS

Members

Adams	Alcock
Allard	Anderson (Victoria)
Assadourian	Asselin
Augustine	Bachand (Saint-Jean)
Bakopanos	Barnes (London West)
Barrette	Beaumier
Bélair	Bélanger
Bellemare	Bennett
Bergeron	Bertrand
Bevilacqua	Bigras
Binet	Blondin-Andrew
Bonin	Bonwick
Bourgeois	Bradshaw
Brisson	Brown
Bulte	Byrne
Caccia	Calder
Cannis	Cardin
Castonguay	Catterall
Cauchon	Chamberlain
Charbonneau	Clark
Coderre	Comartin
Comuzzi	Cotler
Cullen	Cuzner
Dalphond-Guiral	Davies
Desjarlais	Desrochers
DeVillers	Dion
Discepola	Dromisky
Drouin	Duceppe
Duplain	Efford
Eggleton	Eyking
Farrah	Folco
Fontana	Frulla
Fry	Gagnon (Champlain)
Gagnon (Lac-Saint-Jean—Saguenay)	Galloway
Gaudet	Gauthier
Godfrey	Godin
Goodale	Grose
Guarnieri	Guay
Guimond	Harvard
Harvey	Herron
Hubbard	Ianno

Jackson
 Jobin
 Karetak-Lindell
 Keyes
 Kilgour (Edmonton Southeast)
 Kraft Sloan
 Laliberte
 Lanctôt
 LeBlanc
 Lill
 Longfield
 MacAulay
 Mahoney
 Maloney
 Marcil
 Martin (LaSalle—Émard)
 Masse
 McCallum
 McDonough
 McKay (Scarborough East)
 McTeague
 Mills (Toronto—Danforth)
 Mitchell
 Myers
 Neville
 Nystrom
 O'Brien (London—Fanshawe)
 Owen
 Pagtakhan
 Paradis
 Patry
 Perron
 Peterson
 Phinney
 Pickard (Chatham—Kent Essex)
 Pratt
 Proctor
 Provenzano
 Reed (Halton)
 Robillard
 Roy
 Scherrer
 Sgro
 Simard
 St-Hilaire
 St-Julien
 Stewart
 Szabo
 Thibault (West Nova)
 Tirabassi
 Torsney
 Ur
 Vanclief
 Wappel
 Whelan
 Wood— 193

Jennings
 Jordan
 Karygiannis
 Kilger (Stormont—Dundas—Charlottenburgh)
 Knutson
 Laframboise
 Lalonde
 Lastewka
 Lee
 Lincoln
 Loubier
 Macklin
 Malhi
 Marceau
 Marleau
 Martin (Winnipeg Centre)
 Matthews
 McCormick
 McGuire
 McLellan
 Ménard
 Minna
 Murphy
 Nault
 Normand
 O'Brien (Labrador)
 O'Reilly
 Pacetti
 Paquette
 Parrish
 Peric
 Peschisolido
 Pettigrew
 Picard (Drummond)
 Plamondon
 Price
 Proulx
 Redman
 Regan
 Rocheleau
 Savoy
 Scott
 Shepherd
 Speller
 St-Jacques
 St. Denis
 Stoffer
 Telegdi
 Thibault (Saint-Lambert)
 Tonks
 Tremblay
 Valeri
 Volpe
 Wasylcyia-Leis
 Wilfert

NAYS

Members

Abbott
 Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands)
 Benoit
 Burton
 Casson
 Cummins
 Doyle
 Elley
 Fitzpatrick
 Gallant
 Grewal
 Hanger
 Hill (Prince George—Peace River)
 Johnston
 Lunn (Saanich—Gulf Islands)
 Mark
 Meredith
 Mills (Red Deer)
 Pallister
 Rajotte
 Ritz
 Schmidt
 Sorenson

Anders
 Barnes (Gander—Grand Falls)
 Breitzkreuz
 Casey
 Chatters
 Day
 Duncan
 Epp
 Forseth
 Goldring
 Grey
 Hearn
 Jaffer
 Keddy (South Shore)
 Lunney (Nanaimo—Alberni)
 McNally
 Merrifield
 Moore
 Penon
 Reid (Lanark—Carleton)
 Schellenberger
 Solberg
 Stinson

Private Members' Business

Strahl
 Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest)
 White (North Vancouver)
 Thompson (Wild Rose)
 Wayne
 Yelich — 52

PAIRED

Members

Boudria
 Fournier
 Leung
 Crête
 Graham
 Sauvageau — 6

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[*English*]

EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE PROGRAM

The House resumed from March 25 consideration of the motion.

The Speaker: Pursuant to order made Tuesday, March 30, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on Motion No. 475 under private members' business.

• (1550)

[*Translation*]

Before the Clerk having announced the result of the vote:

The Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member for Sault Ste. Marie voted both for and against the motion. Perhaps he can clarify the situation?

[*English*]

Mr. Carmen Provenzano: I wish to be recorded in favour of the motion.

[*Translation*]

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

(*Division No. 42*)

YEAS

Members

Asselin
 Barnes (Gander—Grand Falls)
 Bergeron
 Bourgeois
 Burton
 Caccia
 Casey
 Charbonneau
 Comartin
 Dalfond-Guiral
 Desjarlais
 Doyle
 Duncan
 Folco
 Gagnon (Champlain)
 Gallant
 Gauthier
 Godin
 Grose
 Guimond
 Hill (Prince George—Peace River)
 Keddy (South Shore)
 Laframboise
 Lalonde
 Lill

Bachand (Saint-Jean)
 Barrette
 Bigras
 Breitzkreuz
 Byrne
 Cardin
 Castonguay
 Clark
 Cummins
 Davies
 Desrochers
 Duceppe
 Farrah
 Gagnon (Québec)
 Gagnon (Lac-Saint-Jean—Saguenay)
 Gaudet
 Girard-Bujold
 Grewal
 Guay
 Hearn
 Jennings
 Kilgour (Edmonton Southeast)
 Laliberte
 Lanctôt
 Loubier

Private Members' Business

MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough)
 Marcil
 Martin (Winnipeg Centre)
 Matthews
 Ménard
 Minna
 Nystrom
 Paquette
 Picard (Drummond)
 Proctor
 Rocheleau
 Schellenberger
 St-Jacques
 Stinson
 Strahl
 Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest)
 Tremblay
 Wayne

Marceau
 Mark
 Masse
 McDonough
 Meredith
 Normand
 O'Brien (Labrador)
 Perron
 Plamondon
 Provenzano
 Roy
 St-Hilaire
 St-Julien
 Stoffer
 Thibeault (Saint-Lambert)
 Thompson (Wild Rose)
 Wasylycia-Leis
 Yelich— 86

Schmidt
 Sgro
 Simard
 Sorenson
 St. Denis
 Szabo
 Tirabassi
 Torsney
 Valeri
 Volpe
 Whelan
 Wilfert

Scott
 Shepherd
 Solberg
 Speller
 Stewart
 Thibault (West Nova)
 Tonks
 Ur
 Vanclief
 Wappel
 White (North Vancouver)
 Wood— 146

PAIRED

Members

Boudria
 Fournier
 Leung

Crête
 Graham
 Sauvageau— 6

NAYS

Members

Abbott
 Alcock
 Anders
 Anderson (Victoria)
 Augustine
 Barnes (London West)
 Bélanger
 Bennett
 Bevilacqua
 Blondin-Andrew
 Bonwick
 Brison
 Bulte
 Cannis
 Catterall
 Chatters
 Comuzzi
 Cullen
 Day
 Dion
 Drouin
 Efford
 Elley
 Fitzpatrick
 Frulla
 Gallaway
 Goldring
 Grey
 Hanger
 Harvey
 Hubbard
 Jackson
 Jobin
 Jordan
 Keys
 Kraft Sloan
 LeBlanc
 Lunn (Saachich—Gulf Islands)
 Macklin
 Maloney
 Martin (LaSalle—Émard)
 McCormick
 McLellan
 Merrifield
 Mills (Toronto—Danforth)
 Moore
 Myers
 Neville
 O'Reilly
 Pacetti
 Pallister
 Parrish
 Penson
 Peschisolido
 Pettigrew
 Pickard (Chatham—Kent Essex)
 Price
 Redman
 Regan
 Ritz
 Savoy

Adams
 Allard
 Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands)
 Assadourian
 Bakopanos
 Beaumier
 Bellemare
 Bertrand
 Binet
 Bonin
 Bradshaw
 Brown
 Calder
 Casson
 Chamberlain
 Coderre
 Cotler
 Cuzner
 DeVillers
 Discepolo
 Duplain
 Eggleton
 Eyking
 Fontana
 Fry
 Godfrey
 Goodale
 Guarnieri
 Harvard
 Herron
 Ianno
 Jaffer
 Johnston
 Karygiannis
 Knutson
 Lastewka
 Lee
 Lunney (Nanaimo—Alberni)
 Malhi
 Marleau
 McCallum
 McGuire
 McTeague
 Mills (Red Deer)
 Mitchell
 Murphy
 Nault
 O'Brien (London—Fanshawe)
 Owen
 Pagtakhan
 Paradis
 Patry
 Peric
 Peterson
 Phinney
 Pratt
 Proulx
 Reed (Halton)
 Reid (Lanark—Carleton)
 Robillard
 Scherrer

The Speaker: I declare the motion lost.

THE ROYAL ASSENT

● (1605)

[*Translation*]

A message was delivered by the Usher of the Black Rod as follows:

Mr. Speaker, Her Excellency the Governor General of Canada desires the immediate attendance of this honourable House in the chamber of the Senate.

Accordingly the Speaker with the House went up to the Senate chamber.

And being returned:

The Speaker: I have the honour to inform the House that, when the House went up to the Senate chamber, Her Excellency the Governor General was pleased to give, in Her Majesty's name, the royal assent to the following bills:

Bill C-26, an act for granting to Her Majesty certain sums of money for the public service of Canada for the financial year ending March 31, 2004—Chapter 5.

Bill C-212, an act respecting user fees—Chapter 6.

Bill C-4, an act to amend the Parliament of Canada Act (Ethics Commissioner and Senate Ethics Officer) and other acts in consequence—Chapter 7.

Bill C-27, an act for granting to Her Majesty certain sums of money for the public service of Canada for the financial year ending March 31, 2005—Chapter 8.

Bill C-260, an act to amend the Hazardous Products Act (fire-safe cigarettes)—Chapter 9.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS[*English*]**OLDER ADULT JUSTICE ACT**

The House resumed from March 29 consideration of the motion that Bill C-439, an act to establish the office of the Ombudsman for Older Adult Justice and the Canadian Older Adult Justice Agency and to amend the Criminal Code, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

Private Members' Business

The Speaker: Pursuant to order made on Tuesday, March 30, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion at second reading stage of Bill C-439 under private members' business.

Call in the members.

• (1625)

[Translation]

Before the taking of the vote:

Mr. Michel Guimond: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. My colleagues from the Bloc Québécois and I would like to express our indignation over a procedural incident that occurred earlier.

When an important vote was being held on the motion to truly recognize seasonal workers with respect to the employment insurance system, the vote was interrupted by a message delivered by the Usher of the Black Rod from the Senate, an institution we absolutely do not recognize. It is completely unacceptable to have stopped such an important vote.

The Speaker: The hon. member for Beauport—Montmorency—Côte-de-Beaupré—Île-d'Orléans is always keen to ensure that the Standing Orders of the House of Commons are respected, and this is greatly appreciated by the Chair.

However, in this case, as he may have noticed, the Speaker continued the vote despite the interruption because the vote was under way. We finished the vote, the result was announced and it was only then that we opened the door to let in the messenger.

Is that the complaint of the hon. member for Beauport—Montmorency—Côte-de-Beaupré—Île-d'Orléans?

Mr. Michel Guimond: Mr. Speaker, I wish to point out that, because of this interruption, we were delayed for the last vote, which we are voting on now. This vote was interrupted by another 15 minute bell when we should have voted immediately after the motion on seasonal workers. That is the point I wished to raise.

The Speaker: Yes, there was an interruption. However, I must also note two things. First, the House adopted a motion yesterday announcing the votes that would be held this afternoon. Second, we received a letter from Her Excellency the Governor General indicating that royal assent would be given at a specific time. Accordingly, we went up to the Senate.

[English]

The question is on the motion.

• (1635)

[Translation]

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

(Division No. 43)

YEAS

Members

Abbott
Adams
Allard
Assadourian
Barnes (Gander—Grand Falls)

Ablonczy
Alcock
Anderson (Victoria)
Augustine
Barrette

Bélanger
Binet
Bonin
Bradshaw
Brison
Byrne
Cannis
Casson
Chamberlain
Clark
Comuzzi
Cullen
Cuzner
Day
DeVillers
Discepola
Drouin
Duplain
Elley
Eyking
Fitzpatrick
Frulla
Gallant
Godfrey
Grey
Harvard
Herron
Ianno
Jaffer
Jobin
Jordan
Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
Knutson
Laliberte
Lastewka
Lill
Lunn (Saanich—Gulf Islands)
Macklin
Maloney
Mark
Martin (Winnipeg Centre)
Matthews
McDonough
McLellan
McTeague
Merrifield
Mills (Toronto—Danforth)
Mitchell
Murphy
Nystrom
Owen
Pagtakhan
Patry
Peschisolido
Pettigrew
Pickard (Chatham—Kent Essex)
Proulx
Regan
Ritz
Savoy
Scherrer
Scott
Simard
Sorenson
St-Julien
Stewart
Stoffler
Telegdi
Thibeault (Saint-Lambert)
Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest)
Toews
Torsney
Valeri
Volpe
Wasylycia-Leis
Whelan
Wilfert
Yelich — 165

Bennett
Blondin-Andrew
Bonwick
Breitkreuz
Burton
Calder
Casey
Catterall
Chatters
Comartin
Cotler
Cummins
Davies
Desjarlais
Dion
Doyle
Duncan
Efford
Epp
Farrah
Forseith
Fry
Galloway
Goldring
Harper
Hearn
Hill (Prince George—Peace River)
Jackson
Jennings
Johnston
Karygiannis
Keyes
Kraft Sloan
Lanctôt
Lee
Longfield
MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough)
Malhi
Marci
Marleau
Masse
McCormick
McGuire
McNally
Meredith
Mills (Red Deer)
Minna
Moore
Neville
O'Brien (Labrador)
Pacetti
Parrish
Peric
Peterson
Phinney
Pratt
Redman
Reid (Lanark—Carleton)
Robillard
Schellenberger
Schmidt
Sgro
Solberg
Speller
St. Denis
Stinson
Szabo
Thibault (West Nova)
Thompson (Wild Rose)
Tirabassi
Tonks
Ur
Vanclief
Wappel
Wayne
White (Langley—Abbotsford)
Williams

NAYS

Members

Bachand (Saint-Jean)

Bergeron

Routine Proceedings

Bigras
 Cardin
 Desrochers
 Gagnon (Québec)
 Guay
 Hanger
 Ménard
 Plamondon
 St-Hilaire— 19

Bourgeois
 Dalphond-Guiral
 Duceppe
 Gagnon (Champlain)
 Guimond
 Lalonde
 Picard (Drummond)
 Rocheleau

PAIRED

Members

Boudria
 Fournier
 Leung

Crête
 Graham
 Sauvageau— 6

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried. Accordingly, the bill is referred to the Standing Committee on Justice, Human Rights, Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness.

(Bill read the second time and referred to a committee)

The Speaker: Accordingly the Bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Justice, Human Rights, Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness. 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 Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, National Defence.

* * *

[English]

CHIEF ELECTORAL OFFICER'S REPORT

The Speaker: I have the honour to lay upon the table the report of the Chief Electoral Officer of Canada on the administration of the Perth—Middlesex byelection held on May 12, 2003, and the Lévis-et-Chutes-de-la-Chaudière byelection held on June 16, 2003.

[Translation]

This report is deemed to have been permanently referred to the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM

Hon. Stephen Owen (Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the particular honour pursuant to Standing Order 32(2) to table, in both official languages, five letters addressed to parliamentarians, organizations or individuals who have expressed concerns with specific sponsorship initiatives. These letters call upon the individuals to provide any information they may have to the commissioner of the public inquiry, or to the special council on the recovery of funds.

* * *

GOVERNMENT ON-LINE

Hon. Stephen Owen (Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in addition I have the honour to inform parliamentarians and Canadians about significant progress that has been made on the Government On-line initiative on behalf of the President of the Treasury Board.

I so have the honour to table, in both official languages, the third government-wide GOL report entitled, "Government On-Line 2004".

* * *

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

Hon. Roger Gallaway (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 response to 34 petitions.

* * *

PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

Hon. Roger Gallaway (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I also have the honour to table, in both official languages, biographical notes of Ms. Maria Barrados, whom the government is proposing be named as President of the Public Service Commission.

Pursuant to Standing Order 111.1(1), this matter has also been referred to the Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates.

* * *

BUDGET IMPLEMENTATION ACT, 2004

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Finance, Lib.) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-30, an act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on March 23, 2004.

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

* * *

TlichO LAND CLAIMS AND SELF-GOVERNMENT ACT

Hon. Andy Mitchell (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Lib.) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-31, an act to give effect to a land claims and self-government agreement among the TlichO, the Government of the Northwest Territories and the Government of Canada, to make related amendments to the Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act and to make consequential amendments to other acts.

Routine Proceedings

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

* * *

• (1640)

NATIONAL SECURITY

Hon. Anne McLellan (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the government has longstanding responsibilities for national security. In the foreseeable future, the evolving security environment will continue to demand our attention and consume much of the effort and resources of our national security agencies and those of our principal intelligence partners. In this environment, the government believes it is particularly important that a body of informed parliamentarians play an enhanced role with respect to national security issues by providing advice and guidance in relation to those issues.

[*Translation*]

As announced by the Prime Minister, the government is committed to creating a new national security committee of parliamentarians to review national security matters. This is part of the government's action plan on democratic reform.

[*English*]

National security should be reviewed in a non-partisan environment that places both the security of the country and the need for an appropriate balance between security and individual rights ahead of other considerations. These and many other factors will require careful consideration, including the committee's mandate, its relationship to Parliament and to the government, its access to information and safeguards in respect of such access, its reports, staff support, relationships with other bodies and how all these matters could be best addressed. This may potentially involve legislation.

In establishing the new national committee of parliamentarians, the government will be mindful of the following four principal elements: one, current and past Canadian security and intelligence review arrangements; two, current international practices, primarily by close allies in the area of parliamentary oversight and review of security and intelligence agencies; three, input from Canadian and foreign experts and stakeholders on this subject; and, four, the special obligations of parliamentary committees to protect sensitive information.

Members will recall that on January 28 I announced my intention to engage parliamentarians in a discussion of the mechanisms and mandate of this new national security committee of parliamentarians. I have since asked the government and opposition House leaders in both chambers to have this issue referred to the appropriate committees of both Houses with a view to having them work together.

Today I am pleased to table a consultation paper which supplies Parliament with relevant background information, as the committee sets about formulating advice on the proposed status, mandate and structure of the national security committee. The consultation paper provides information on how our closest allies in the national security area have approached these issues. These countries are the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand. I

encourage the committee to undertake discussions with legislators and experts from these countries, and to seek the views of Canadian stakeholders and experts.

[*Translation*]

I expect that consultations will be carried out in the coming months and I look forward to the committee's recommendations in the fall of this year.

[*English*]

The government will consider this advice, along with the findings of consultations with our allies, to come up with the best configuration in terms of mandate, structure and mechanisms of the new national security committee of parliamentarians.

• (1645)

Mr. Kevin Sorenson (Crowfoot, CPC): Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the official opposition, I welcome this opportunity to respond to the statement by the Minister of Public Safety regarding the consultative process for the creation of the national security committee of parliamentarians.

Quite obviously, the minister has picked a very opportune time to table this report in the House of Commons. It comes only one day after the Auditor General brought down a scathing report regarding the government's record on security. Unfortunately, for the minister this announcement cannot deflect the Auditor General's criticism and it cannot hide the fact that for over a decade the government has failed miserably in most fundamental role; that of the protection of its citizens.

Yesterday, Ms. Fraser revealed that there were significant gaps. She revealed that there were significant errors in national security. She has found that there are major deficiencies in inter-agency cooperation, out of day terrorist watch lists and as many as 4,500 airport employees who have "possible criminal associations warranting further investigation". Furthermore, border officers are not provided with a list or any other information concerning the 25,000 Canadian passports that are lost or stolen annually.

The Auditor General found:

The government as a whole [failed to] adequately assess intelligence lessons learned from critical incidents such as September 11...

The Auditor General also noted:

—the deficiencies we've noted are serious and need to be addressed on an urgent basis.

The operative word is "urgent", yet the minister has come today to the House announcing that in the coming months consultations will be carried out with an end to creating a new national security committee of parliamentarians. She has made this statement knowing full well a federal election is imminent, and this will very likely not even come into existence for at least a year or more.

If members do not believe that this is exactly what will happen, one only has to look at the fact that in 1996 the then auditor general pointed out the exact same deficiencies in our security as Ms. Fraser identified yesterday. Yet the government has failed for eight years to address those deficiencies.

Routine Proceedings

We do not have a year. We do not have a month to address all major deficiencies in our security. Canada is a named target now. It is a named target today. Look at the headlines today in the *National Post* and other papers where al-Qaeda has named Canada as a target. This is nothing new. We know we have been a target for a number of years. While the government continues to consult, plot and plan, Canadian citizens have been identified as human targets by al-Qaeda.

Actions speak louder than words. The time for action is long overdue. Yesterday, the Auditor General confirmed that it is long overdue.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Pauline Picard (Drummond, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Bloc Québécois estimates that there are two reasons for this committee.

In her report tabled in the House of Commons yesterday, the Auditor General of Canada spoke out about serious flaws with regard to the management of security measures and programs, although in its 2001 budget, the federal government announced \$7.7 billion for this sector.

Among these flaws, we note: inability to share information between government departments and agencies; information about 25,000 lost and stolen passports that is not readily available to frontline officials; incomplete watch lists at the border, and the need to have names removed from the database. An estimated 4,500 individuals, or 5.5%, holding restricted area clearances at five major airports had criminal associations worth investigating further.

Furthermore, the Bloc Québécois has on many occasions condemned this government's inability to achieve a fair balance between security and freedom in its legislation on safety measures. Both the Anti-Terrorism Act, rushed through in 2001, and the public safety bill failed the test.

Consequently, the Bloc Québécois will take part in the consultation process to ensure that the formula retained by the committee will allow it to continue to do its job effectively as an opposition party.

• (1650)

[*English*]

Hon. Lorne Nystrom (Regina—Qu'Appelle, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I also want to give our party's support for a committee on national security. It would be a positive thing to have.

I also want to register my disappointment that in her remarks today the minister did not make any reference to the charges that were made by the Auditor General the other day about major problems in terms of the work she has done in terms of national security. It would have been very helpful if she would have made a comment today in response to the Auditor General. Those were very serious charges and they should have been responded to by the minister responsible.

We do support the establishment of this particular committee. It comes as part of the democratic reform package of the government. However I want to point out one thing that counteracts democratic reform.

The Liberals are talking about this being a joint committee of parliamentarians, members of the House of Commons and members of the Senate. Members of the Senate are not elected and are not accountable. It is not a democratic institution and this is part of democratic reform. I am sure this committee should be a committee of elected parliamentarians.

I see the parliamentary secretary smiling. He knows the point I make. He knows the member from Sarnia would make exactly the same speech if he were speaking in the House today on this particular issue. If we are serious about parliamentary reform then there is no place in a modern democratic society for a legislative body that is not accountable to the people of the country.

When we appoint people to a commission, such as the CRTC or any other commission, those people are accountable because they have term limitations and are accountable to the government and to the House of Commons. When their terms expire they are replaced by someone else. Some of those commissions review regulations and some issue licences. They are not institutions that are legislative bodies that make decisions on public policy.

I say to the government across the way that the Prime Minister speaks loudly when it comes to democratic reform but he tiptoes through the tulips when it comes to any real reform of democratic institutions. This is another indication today of the Prime Minister not changing anything in terms of democratic reform.

The committee to be established would review security in the country, which is a very positive thing and something we certainly support. We support the idea that it will have broad responsibilities for issues of national security.

The second thing I want to stress is the non-partisan environment. Security is too important an issue to be controlled by a partisan agenda. I want to suggest, and I wish the minister was here, that the committee be composed of an equal number of government and opposition MPs so it will be truly non-partisan in nature. I would like the government to take a look at that as a possibility.

The committee should also have broad access to information because, without that, it will be ineffective and any work it does will be superficial at best.

Finally, the sensitive nature of the information must be respected by all members of the committee but, at the same time, it should not amount to a gag order on members of the committee being unable to speak out about national security.

We support this. I wish the minister had commented on the Auditor General's report. I also wish the government would not put members of the Senate, the unelected and undemocratic body, on this particular parliamentary committee.

[*Translation*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair): The hon. chief government whip on a point of order.

[English]

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I would seek the consent of the House to revert back to tabling of documents in order to table on behalf of the government the documents we have been talking about for the last few minutes?

• (1655)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair): Does the hon. member have unanimous consent to revert to tabling of documents?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

* * *

NATIONAL SECURITY

Hon. Mauril Bélanger (Deputy Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I wish to table in the House, in both official languages, documents to help form the creation of a committee of parliamentarians to review national security.

* * *

[Translation]

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Mr. Bernard Patry (Pierrefonds—Dollard, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the first report of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade.

The committee has studied the issue of Canada's relations with the Muslim world. This report is the result of a year of work by the committee members, including meetings in 15 countries in Europe, North Africa, the Middle East and Asia.

I would like to thank Canada's embassies in the countries we visited for their assistance, and my fellow members of the committee and the committee staff for their excellent work.

[English]

FINANCE

Mr. Roy Cullen (Etobicoke North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have honour to present, in both official languages, the fourth report of the Standing Committee on Finance entitled "Duty Remission and the Zero-Rating of Tariffs on Textile Inputs: The Canadian Apparel Industry".

[Translation]

In addition, pursuant to Standing Order 109, the committee requests that the government table a comprehensive response to the report.

[English]

ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS, NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. Rick Laliberte (Churchill River, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the second report of the Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs, Northern Development and Natural Resources on the main estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2005.

Routine Proceedings

PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

Mrs. Judi Longfield (Whitby—Ajax, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 15th report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs regarding the associate membership of some standing committees.

If the House gives its consent, I intend to move concurrence in the 15th report later this day.

FISHERIES AND OCEANS

Mr. Tom Wappel (Scarborough Southwest, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the first report of the Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans entitled "Safe, Secure, Sovereign: Reinventing the Canadian Coast Guard". This report is a unanimous report of our committee.

[Translation]

Pursuant to Standing Order 109, the committee requests that the government table a comprehensive response within 150 days of the tabling of the report.

* * *

[English]

HOUSING BILL OF RIGHTS

Ms. Libby Davies (Vancouver East, NDP) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-509, an act to provide for secure, adequate, accessible and affordable housing for Canadians.

She said: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague, the member for Winnipeg Centre, because I know he has been a very strong advocate for housing rights in the country and in his riding.

I am very proud to present the bill today because it is a bill about respecting the dignity and worth of all people in Canada by protecting their human rights; for the provision of secure, adequate, accessible and affordable housing and security in its enjoyment.

The bill would ensure that housing reflects the needs of local communities, including aboriginal communities; that people are not paying more than 30% of their income for rent; that there is appropriate housing for different needs and provides reasonable design options, including access for the elderly and the disabled; and that there is adequate housing for people who are homeless, as specified in a section of the bill.

I thank all the groups that assisted in my bringing the bill to light in the House. It has strong support across the country.

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

* * *

• (1700)

PUBLIC SERVICE EMPLOYMENT ACT

Mr. Bill Casey (Cumberland—Colchester, CPC) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-510, an act to amend the Public Service Employment Act and the Public Service Employment Act, enacted by section 12 of chapter 22 of the Statutes of Canada, 2003 (area of selection).

Routine Proceedings

He said: Mr. Speaker, the bill would stop the government from using geographic criteria to determine a person's eligibility to have a job in the national capital region.

It affects almost all of us, including you, Mr. Speaker. Just today I took seven jobs off the Internet. These are seven jobs, with a wide variety of qualifications, for seven different departments. Only those people who live in the national capital region can apply for them. The people in Timmins—James Bay cannot apply. The people in Red Deer and the people in Cumberland—Colchester cannot apply. Even you, Mr. Speaker, cannot apply.

It is an offensive practice and I want to stop this discrimination by postal code and I want to stop it now with the bill.

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

* * *

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

Mrs. Judi Longfield (Whitby—Ajax, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, if the House gives its consent, I move that the 15th report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs presented to the House earlier this day be concurred in.

(Motion agreed to)

* * *

[Translation]

PETITIONS

TELEVISION VIOLENCE

Ms. Carole-Marie Allard (Laval East, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36, I have the honour to present to the House a petition asking the government for regulations banning children's programs that show violence as a normal means of conflict resolution and prohibiting the broadcasting of extremely violent films until after 10 p.m.

[English]

MARRIAGE

Mrs. Elsie Wayne (Saint John, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have five petitions to present today with regard to the definition of marriage as being the lasting union of one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others and that it cannot and should not be modified by a legislative act or a court of law.

The first petition is signed by 116 residents of Saskatchewan.

The second petition is signed by 326 residents of Calgary, Alberta, and it is also in favour of marriage as being between one man and one woman.

The third petition, which contains 313 signatures of residents of Saskatchewan, once again is asking that we do not change the definition of marriage.

The fourth petition is signed by 228 residents of Pictou, Nova Scotia, who state that marriage is the lasting union of one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others and cannot and should not be modified by a legislative act or a court of law.

The fifth petition has 314 signatures of residents of Ontario, who are also asking that marriage be the union between one man and one woman.

Ms. Val Meredith (South Surrey—White Rock—Langley, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure, as one of my last acts here in Parliament, to present a petition on behalf of some of my constituents.

The petitioners call upon Parliament to pass legislation to recognize the institution of marriage in federal law as being the lifelong union of one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others.

● (1705)

PROPERTY RIGHTS

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have two petitions that I wish to present today.

The first petition is from people in eastern Ontario who acknowledge that the federal government has abandoned rural communities under the weight of urban socialism. The freedoms, the over-regulation and the over-taxation is attacking these people from the very corners of their way of life.

The petitioners therefore call upon Parliament to correct the mistake of 1982 and amend the Constitution to include the right to own, use and earn a living from private property.

MARRIAGE

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the second petition asks that Parliament redefine the definition of marriage as being the union of one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Mr. Grant McNally (Dewdney—Alouette, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have one petition to present today signed by 53 people in my riding who are opposed to war.

The petitioners would like to see peaceful resolutions through the United Nations whenever possible. They are also against the military action which took place in Iraq.

PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Mr. Norman Doyle (St. John's East, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have two petitions to present on behalf of the residents of St. John's East.

The petitioners state that the assistance of the Government of Canada is required for the provision of affordable disability support, such as an adaptive device program for all Canadians who are blind, visually impaired, or deaf and blind.

The petitioners call upon Parliament to enact legislation permitting the Government of Canada to work with other levels of government to ensure that all Canadians receive access to affordable adaptive devices.

HOUSING

Ms. Libby Davies (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to present a petition signed by close to 700 residents of Toronto who are very concerned about the housing crisis there. They call upon Parliament to adopt the 1% solution put forward by the Toronto Disaster Relief Committee to eliminate the national disaster of homelessness in Canada.

[*Translation*]

DIVORCE ACT

Ms. Diane Bourgeois (Terrebonne—Blainville, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour and pleasure to present a petition in the name of the Association des secondes épouses et conjoints inc.

This petition calls on Parliament to amend the Divorce Act to take into account its effects on the day-to-day realities faced by second spouses.

[*English*]

MARRIAGE

Mr. Bob Mills (Red Deer, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to present a petition from my constituents in Red Deer. The petitioners call upon Parliament to immediately hold a renewed debate on the definition of marriage and to take all necessary steps to preserve marriage as the union of one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others.

PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Mr. Rex Barnes (Gander—Grand Falls, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have a petition with regard to the availability of library print materials for people with disabilities. The petitioners call upon the Government of Canada to support the production of alternative format library materials for print disability Canadians, including persons who are blind, visually impaired and/or deaf and blind. I submit this to the House.

MARRIAGE

Mr. John Cummins (Delta—South Richmond, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have a petition from folks in Swift Current, Saskatchewan, Trail, British Columbia, and Walkerton, Ontario. There are almost 350 signatures. The petitioners note that marriage is the lasting union of a man and woman to the exclusion of all others. They call upon Parliament to maintain the current definition of marriage and prevent any court from overturning that definition.

CANADA POST

Mr. Bill Casey (Cumberland—Colchester, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to present this petition signed by 74 people from River Hebert in my riding. They are objecting to proposals by the post office to close down their community post office. They feel it will have a very detrimental effect on their community. They are asking the government to uphold the moratorium on post office closures.

LABELLING OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis (Winnipeg North Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to present 11 petitions. Seven are on the topic of alcohol warning labels. These petitioners call upon Parliament to enact the initiative that was taken by this place to ensure that there are warning labels on all alcohol beverage

Routine Proceedings

containers to deal with the rising and serious incidence of fetal alcohol syndrome.

● (1710)

IMMIGRATION

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis (Winnipeg North Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the other four petitions all have to do with immigration and family reunification. These are petitioners from all across Canada who believe that the federal government has fallen short of its own targets in recent years with respect to immigration and that family reunification is a cornerstone of our policy.

They call on the government and Parliament to support Bill C-436, an act to amend the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act, which would allow people to sponsor, once in a lifetime, a relative not now eligible under the family reunification class.

I respectfully submit these petitions.

BILL C-333

Mr. Inky Mark (Dauphin—Swan River, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour of tabling two petitions.

The first one is on behalf of the Chinese community in Canada dealing with redress. The petitioners call on the government to enact Bill C-333, the Chinese-Canadian recognition and restitution act, to recognize the injustice that was done to persons of Chinese descent and to provide for public commemoration and for restitution, which is to be devoted to education on Chinese Canadian history and the promotion of racial harmony.

BEEF INDUSTRY

Mr. Inky Mark (Dauphin—Swan River, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the second petition deals with the BSE issue across the country. The petitioners call on the government to take immediate action to develop an internationally recognized protocol designed to restore confidence in Canadian beef products and to open the international beef markets to Canadian producers.

MARRIAGE

Mr. Reed Elley (Nanaimo—Cowichan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise today in the House to present three petitions from Canadians in Ontario, Saskatchewan and Alberta. All of them are calling upon the government to enact legislation that would enshrine the traditional definition of marriage into law, that being the union of one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others. I am very proud to be able to present these today.

Routine Proceedings

HEALTH

Ms. Alexa McDonough (Halifax, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I wish to table two petitions on different subjects, actually a mountain of petitions with thousands of signatures, the first with 144 pages' worth of pleading with the government as part of the continuing campaign for Beads of Hope to address the global HIV-AIDS pandemic: by cancelling the debt burden on impoverished countries; by increasing Canada's overseas development assistance to the long promised 7% of GNP; by doubling funds to fight HIV-AIDS here at home; by increasing our global fund contribution; and finally, by ensuring access to life saving medicines to combat TB, malaria and HIV-AIDS.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Ms. Alexa McDonough (Halifax, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to table another petition signed by thousands more Canadians urging the government to say no to star wars and work instead with Partners for Peace for more arms control, and also to end the production and sale of weapons of mass destruction. I am very pleased to table these petitions on behalf of a huge number of Canadians.

LABELLING OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

Mr. Pat Martin (Winnipeg Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I have eight separate petitions on two subjects. The first five petitions I would like to present represent Canadians from as far apart as St. John's, Newfoundland, to Quebec and the Six Nations of the Grand River Territory. The petitioners call upon Canada to recognize that fetal alcohol syndrome and fetal alcohol syndrome effects are a chronic problem and that women who are pregnant certainly should be warned and cautioned about the negative effects of drinking while pregnant.

They therefore call upon Canada to regulate that any beverage carrier must have a warning on it saying that drinking alcohol during pregnancy can cause birth defects. They call upon Parliament to implement that regulation.

IMMIGRATION

Mr. Pat Martin (Winnipeg Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, my second group of petitions deals with an immigration issue. The petitioners argue that new Canadians should be able to sponsor, once in a lifetime, one family member who would not normally qualify under the family reunification class; in other words, we would vote into effect Bill C-436, which would change the immigration act to broaden the family sponsorship category so that once during a person's life one family member could be sponsored who otherwise would not qualify.

* * *

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

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

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Mr. John Cummins (Delta—South Richmond, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Time may be running out. I asked

Question No. 11 on February 2 of this year. It was a question that I first asked on October 28, 2003.

I asked Question No. 13 on February 2 of this year, a question that I first asked on September 24, 2003.

Since that time I have gone through access to information, which tells me that the question has already been answered. The government has had the answer to question but has refused to supply it.

On February 3 of this year I asked Question No. 17 and again there has been no answer.

Two of the questions that are outstanding were asked over six months ago. I think it is time that those questions were answered, Mr. Speaker.

• (1715)

Mr. Loyola Hearn (St. John's West, CPC): Mr. Speaker, when members put questions on the order paper there is a rule that they have to be answered within a timeframe. I would like the parliamentary secretary or the deputy House leader to tell us how many questions have been answered, because I do not believe any have been answered in this session.

Hon. Roger Gallaway: Mr. Speaker, the hon. members opposite ought to know or could possibly know or probably should know that the Standing Orders control this and that, first, any question on the order paper that has not been answered at the time of prorogation dies on the order paper. That is number one.

Number two—

An hon. member: We want our second answer, thank you.

Hon. Roger Gallaway: It would save time if they would read the Standing Orders, but secondly, there are 45 days and if it is not answered within 45 days they know that it is referred to a committee.

An hon. member: Oh, oh.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair): Order, please. We will be tracking the orders and we will report back to the members concerned.

* * *

MOTIONS FOR PAPERS

Hon. Roger Gallaway (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I ask that all Notices of Motions for the Production of Papers be allowed to stand.

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[Translation]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair): I wish to inform the House that because of the ministerial statement and the recorded divisions, government orders will be extended by one hour and a half.

Government Orders

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Discussions have taken place among the parties concerning the extension of the time for government orders. If you were to seek it, I think you would find consent to proceed to private members' business at 5:30 p.m. today.

[English]

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

CANADA ELECTIONS ACT

The House resumed from March 26 consideration of the motion that Bill C-3, an act to amend the Canada Elections Act and the Income Tax Act, be read the third time and passed.

Ms. Val Meredith (South Surrey—White Rock—Langley, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to speak this one last time in the House of Commons. This will probably be my last attempt at effecting change from the government.

It is appropriate that the bill that I should be speaking to is one of democratic principles. I ran in 1988 based on the need to bring democratic principles back to the Canadian electoral system. This bill is a result of the Supreme Court of Canada acknowledging that the legislation that the government had put into place was not democratic.

This bill is addressing the decision of the Supreme Court that it was undemocratic to require a party to run 50 candidates in an election. If two people wanted to represent a party to represent a cause, an idea or an issue, that should be allowed as long as there were some other things they managed to do, and that is to show that they had some following and some people agreed with their position.

The bill that has been introduced to address the Supreme Court's decision allows one individual, if that is what it is, with 250 signatures in support and with at least 4 officers representing that party, to run in an election in order to raise the issues.

This is important because in 1987 the Reform Party talked about the need to form a party in order to raise some of the issues on democratic reform, electoral reform, economic reform and judicial reform, and to be held to a certain standard. Putting those ideas out to the population would have been very restrictive. Under the new legislative guidelines that the Liberal government tried to bring in, it is questionable whether the Reform Party of Canada would ever have gotten off the ground.

As I have said, it is very apropos that in my last speech in the House of Commons I should be defending the principles of democratic reform, in that any Canadian who seeks to put ideas before the electorate of change and moving our country forward should not be stopped by legislation in the House.

If anything, we should be opening up the process and that is what Bill C-3 does. It opens up the process so that Canadians have the freedom to express their concerns through the electoral system.

I would like to take this opportunity, as it is my last time in the House, to thank the constituents of South Surrey—White Rock—Langley for their support over the last 10 and a half years. I have been honoured to represent them. I feel I have done a good job on their behalf in the House and on behalf of the Conservative Party, the Canadian Alliance, and the Reform Party before that, in moving forward legislative changes that would give Canadians a greater voice and that would give my constituents a better life in this country.

I want to take the opportunity to thank them and to acknowledge that I could not have done it without their support. I look forward to the days ahead of me where I will continue to live and work in the community.

Perhaps I will be on the other side of the fence putting pressure on the new representative to ensure that change moves forward and that we always strive for what is best for all Canadians and for our country. We should have the courage to look ahead and take the bold steps that are required if we are ever going to deal with some of the most serious problems we have in our country, whether it is on the security issues that we spoke of earlier today or on health care.

I, and a lot of Canadians, have a great fear that 20 years from now we will not have any health care system to speak of. It is essential for the people who sit in the House to have the courage to look at how we can do things differently and in a way that will secure our health care for future generations.

We must also ensure that our country is competitive and that we raise our stature in the international community. We must think big and we must be bold in the steps that we take.

● (1720)

I only hope and wish that the people who replace me here and who move on in the years to come have the courage to do the right thing for all Canadians.

Mr. Speaker, thank you for the opportunity to thank my constituents and to speak to this bill. I believe it is a good move by the government to recognize the democratic principles that are so important to having a free and democratic country.

The Deputy Speaker: The Chair is interpreting the mood of the House and taking into account what has been said by either side in terms of an agreement to see the clock as 5:30 p.m. Is that correct?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: It being 5:30 p.m., pursuant to order made Tuesday, March 30, 2004, the question on the motion for the third reading stage of Bill C-3 is deemed put and carried on division.

(Motion agreed to, bill read the third time and passed)

● (1725)

The Deputy Speaker: Pursuant to order made earlier today the House will now proceed to the consideration of private members' business as listed on today's Order Paper.

*Private Members' Business***PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS**

[English]

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: Mr. Speaker, I ask that you seek unanimous consent to allow my speaking time to be transferred to my colleague from Winnipeg Centre for the duration of this debate.

The Deputy Speaker: I wonder if it might also be helpful if the hon. member, under whose name this bill stands, would indicate as to whether he would want to retain the right to come back at a later time with no additional time. Or, would he want to keep the option to come back to speak on this bill, either not later today, but at another time if it does not collapse today.

Mr. Peter Stoffer: Mr. Speaker, I wish to inform the House that I should be back in about 20 minutes. I would like to have the option that you have outlined.

The Deputy Speaker: I think what we are asking consent for now is to transfer the time allotted which would be 15 minutes, plus also 5 minutes for questions or comments to the hon. member for Winnipeg Centre who is seconding the motion.

Is there consent for that?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: I am also concerned that there is also a five minute reply at the end of the debate. I do not think this is part of the package. In any event, let me ask the member for Sackville—Musquodoboit Valley—Eastern Shore, does he reserve the right, also in his own name, to close the debate with the five minutes of reply?

Mr. Peter Stoffer: Yes, Mr. Speaker, that is the correct intention.

The Deputy Speaker: On debate, the hon. member for Winnipeg Centre.

Mr. Pat Martin (Winnipeg Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I wish to thank all members for agreeing to have the member for Sackville—Musquodoboit Valley—Eastern Shore give his time to me so that I can speak first. The hon. member has another engagement and he would certainly like to reserve whatever time he may have later for the opportunity to put his own points forward on his own very worthy bill.

Having said that, Mr. Speaker, I am sure that this is the type of private member's bill that you personally would be interested in. I want to compliment and commend the member for Sackville—Musquodoboit Valley—Eastern Shore for following this issue through for many years now, raising it in the House a number of times and trying to garner support and interest from other members of Parliament. It is such a worthy subject.

The reason I think that you, Mr. Speaker, would be interested in this is because it deals with amateur sports, fitness, and trying to use our taxation system to encourage youth to take part in amateur sports, thereby enable more youth to avail themselves of the opportunity to play in organized sports.

Most MPs in the House would be aware that there are growing costs associated with having one's children involved in any amateur sport. For whatever reasons, the costs seem to be escalating. Both of my kids played hockey up to the high school level.

I know full well the cost per year of trying to keep my kids in skates. The same is true whether it is gymnastics, tennis or any number of activities that we want our kids to be involved in, for all the obvious health and social reasons. It is becoming a real barrier and a real burden.

More and more parents are having to face this uncomfortable choice and wrestle with their annual budgets as to whether or not they can afford to have their kids take part in this most healthy of social choices they could make.

It further complicates the issue, just by way of introduction, when physical education is shed first as more and more school boards come into a budget crisis. The schools have been forced to choose between academics and physical education, and more and more the latter has fallen by the wayside.

We have a generation of kids—and this is not a brand new problem, it has been a growing problem—that are increasingly sedentary and the predictable consequences are starting to become very self-evident. We have a generation of children where obesity, for the first time in Canadian history, is a chronic medical problem among our children. We recently heard from a doctor who told us that he is finding high levels of cholesterol in 10 year old children. Imagine, cholesterol and clogging of the arteries in 10 and 12 year old children.

It is generally accepted that we must encourage this generation of kids to get more active, and all subsequent generations of Canadians. We are no exception; we should be more active. In fact, we should walk 12,000 steps per day, if nothing else, and I am not sure very many of us do.

This has become a huge public health issue. Too many of our kids are watching television and playing video games, and they are not involved in physical sports. It used to be that kids got their exercise doing chores around the farm and household. That is less and less the case.

The member for Sackville—Musquodoboit Valley—Eastern Shore has put forward a very viable and timely idea. We would encourage and make possible for more parents to get their kids involved in sports if we were to amend the Income Tax Act so that their amateur sport fees and costs were tax deductible at roughly the same taxation credit as charitable donations, roughly 34%. The idea has great merit.

● (1730)

The idea needs to be fleshed out. There are some people who criticize this idea. For instance, they do not want golf green fees at some expensive golf course to be tax deductible. However, I should point out that it is tax deductible for business purposes sometimes to belong to these golf courses. My colleague from Nova Scotia is targeting a basic ma and pa situation where it might cost the parents an additional \$1,200, \$1,500 or even \$2,000 per year above and beyond school taxes to keep their kids in some kind of fitness activity, such as amateur sports.

Private Members' Business

We are envisioning the overall cost to the government to grant this tax deduction to be calculated at a couple of thousand dollars per household, not the grossly inflated cost of the fees at a private golf course, which might be \$10,000 or \$20,000 per year. That is not the point and I hope members do not cloud the issue by raising that point.

We are trying to target the working family that is having a tough time paying the \$300 or \$400 fee to be on a hockey team, plus the cost of a good pair of skates. I gave my son a pair of skates at Christmas, a middle range pair of skates, which cost \$325. That was not the best pair on the shelf by any means, nor was it the cheapest either.

We can see what working families are going through. It is getting more and more difficult to keep kids in sports because of the time factor associated with parents being able to give up their time during the evenings and weekends to take their kids to sports. With the added burden of the cost factor, more and more working families are simply having to say that it is not possible within their limited budget.

We can harken back to not too long ago when the federal government was willing to play an active role in encouraging more kids and all Canadians to take part in healthy activities through the Participation program. Arguably that was the most successful public relations program that any Canadian government has ever undertaken. It literally changed the way we think about activity and about sports. Some people would call it social engineering, but they can call it whatever they want. At a relatively low cost compared to the benefit of having a healthier citizenry, Canadians were motivated to get off the couch, to get active and do something.

This bill is in the same vein. In the very best interests of Canadians, in the very best interests of public health, we want to encourage more kids to get active. We want to enable them to play sports. The physical benefit is one thing but there are obvious public health benefits. There is also the well documented social benefits associated with being involved in organized sports. Healthy bodies and healthy minds mean healthy choices that kids make.

Let us not just talk about the relief to our beleaguered medical system. Let us also talk about the relief to our criminal justice system. The more we get kids involved in healthy choices, the less likely they are to run afoul of our criminal justice system. We would much rather subsidize to some small degree their ability to play sports than we would reserve a jail cell for them, or see them appear in court in our criminal justice system down the road when they run afoul of the law.

This is such a self-evident issue. It does not need a great deal of argument to convince those of us in this room that we want more kids playing sports because it is the right thing to do and because it builds healthy minds and healthy bodies. If we can use our tax system as a way to steer more families and more children and youth into healthy living, then why are we not doing it?

We believe there should be a minister of health and also a minister of healthy living. We were glad to see that development in the most recent cabinet structure. We do not need a minister of managing illness which is really what the Minister of Health has become.

Anything we can do to encourage the overall general public health of Canadians we are morally obligated to do so. I do not accept the argument that it is a huge cost factor in terms of lost taxation revenue for the government.

● (1735)

As I said, the hon. member for Sackville—Musquodoboit Valley—Eastern Shore has pointed out to me that this bill was never intended to apply to someone who spends \$20,000 on green fees at a luxury private golf course. This bill was intended to give relief to the working family that otherwise would not be able to afford to enrol their children in an organized sports team in their community club.

Those fees have gone up lately too. The trickle down effect of budgetary cuts and transfer payments has reached the lowest common denominator, the neighbourhood community clubs in our municipalities. The federal transfer payments to the provinces have been cut. The transfer payments from the provinces to the municipalities have been cut. That has manifested itself in higher fees for something as simple as a community club, to play on a soccer team, or a hockey team, or a baseball team, or whatever organized sport. Those fees have gone up and working families are having a hard time finding the coin to get their kids active. We all know we have to get our kids active because we have to make our kids healthy.

I was speaking to a doctor in the context of my efforts to have trans fats banned in the country. In that context I was speaking to a lot of medical health practitioners. I was shocked to learn that there are 10 year olds with high cholesterol problems. I was shocked to learn the level of obesity among our youth. It is epidemic. I was shocked to learn that one 12 ounce can of Coca-Cola has 13 teaspoons of sugar in it.

Unhealthy things are coming at kids from all directions. It has resulted in the least healthy generation in Canadian history. Ironically, with all the advances in medical science and with all the developments and our ability to keep people alive longer, we are not any healthier. In fact, we are less healthy than when people had to throw bales around on the farm or had to help with the seeding and the harvesting on the farm. We are now an urban society largely and our children are less active than ever before.

I urge members to do all they can to support initiatives like this one. Specifically, I urge them to see fit to support Bill C-210 as put forward by my colleague, the member for Sackville—Musquodoboit Valley—Eastern Shore. We should do anything we can to make sure that the next generation is healthier than this generation.

With the exception of some MPs in the House of Commons, the Participation campaign had a profound effect on the health of Canadians. Some of us here are still too sedentary, but Participation worked. However, that program is dead. We could successfully argue there is justification to institute new initiatives that would be just as effective as the Participation program to help youth get involved in sports.

Private Members' Business

I should point out, Mr. Speaker, that this tax deduction would apply to you and me. Reasonable gym fees or whatever would in fact be tax deductible as an incentive for healthy living. People should not call it social engineering; I know there will be those who do not agree that we should be manipulating people's behaviour patterns, but this is an exception. We are trying to encourage people to make healthy choices and to do the right thing.

In closing, I will simply say how much I appreciate the efforts of the member for Sackville—Musquodoboit Valley—Eastern Shore in this regard. I personally thank him as a parent. I think the people I represent would thank him. They would be pleased to know that the House of Commons is seized of an issue that would be so beneficial and so useful to so many of them. Given the material we sometimes end up dealing with, this is a positive thing we could do for Canadians.

I again thank the hon. members for granting unanimous consent for us to trade places so that the member from Sackville could make his other prior commitment and still have an opportunity to speak to his bill later.

• (1740)

Hon. John McKay (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for Sackville—Musquodoboit Valley—Eastern Shore for bringing the proposals to our attention.

I know the hon. member and I like him very much. In the years that I have been here I have known him to be an enthusiastic amateur soccer player. He has helped us all get organized in terms of playing a few games of soccer, particularly with the pages. He likes to be involved athletically as well as in the House.

There is much argument that amateur sport is a vital ingredient to the development of our society. I do not think that is in issue here. It also contributes to our Canadian identity. It has the power to enrich our lives in many ways.

Personally I quite enjoy a game of hockey. I play every Sunday night. I have to say that as the years go by, the players seem to get faster and younger. I do not know how that works, but I think other members here can identify with that. I have a sense of a conflict of interest here because indeed it does cost some money to play on Sunday nights.

It is all part of a healthy lifestyle that people participate in sport. They feel better about themselves and about their fellow Canadians. Athletics leads people to leading a healthier and a longer life. I think that is statistically verifiable.

In this vein, members will remember that one of our colleagues, the member from Broadview, issued a report which was quite descriptive of the healthy benefits of participating in sport and how sport would reduce coronary disease, colon cancer and non-insulin dependent diabetes by as much as 50%. These are all significant benefits not only to the individual involved, but of course to the larger society.

In addition, we agree that sport enhances our sense of Canadianism, our sense of pride. We all sit in front of the television watching our athletes compete in the Olympics and in other events.

There are very few people of my generation who cannot say where they were when Canada beat Russia in the final game in Moscow, which was kind of distinctive. Just as everyone from my generation knows where they were when President Kennedy was shot, Canadians particularly know where they were when Canada won that game.

We can recall the 2002 Olympics where both the men's and the women's hockey teams won Olympic gold. It was an extraordinary point of pride for our country.

Recently, Perdita Felicien won the gold medal in hurdles in both the indoor and outdoor track and field world championships. She lives in the riding neighbouring mine, in Pickering. We take great pride in her accomplishments.

There is hardly a school boy or school girl who has not thought of the enjoyment that they received from participating in sports in school.

We agree with the benefits. We agree in some respects with the principles of the hon. member's bill. However, the government will have to resist the bill for a number of reasons. We believe that the bill is inefficient. We also think that the bill gives an unfair advantage to sports activities over other forms of activities which Canadians participate in and enjoy. We think it would be an inappropriate use of the tax system. We also think it would be quite costly.

• (1745)

Let me unpack those in a little more detail.

First, on the inefficiency, we think the bill will be an inefficient bill because it will cost a lot of money, and yet it will not achieve the stated goal of the hon. member. We do not think it will have any significant impact on participation rates in sports, and that is the goal of the bill.

If I understood my hon. colleague's argument, he felt that finances were a barrier to sports participation. Surveys have been done which showed that a minuscule number of Canadians, namely 2.3% to be exact, said that the cost of sports fees were a barrier to their participation. I agree with my colleague that Canadians are an inactive society. We are a bunch of couch potatoes. However, money is not the barrier here. It appears to be either a lack of time, or interest or other impediments. We think this is an inefficient use of the tax system. The goal would not be achieved by using this instrument.

The second point I would like to make is about the inequity that the bill may well create between Canadians because in some respects it gives an unfair advantage to sports activities to the detriment of other types of activities.

I have three daughters and if one of them said that she needed \$100 to go to a sports activity and the other one said that she needed \$100 to participate in the theatre, I would get a tax deduction for one child but not for the other. I cannot quite rationalize that. Either I should get it for both or I should get it for nobody.

Private Members' Business

Bill C-210 would create some difficulties as people tried to squeeze things like dance and things of that nature into some sort of form of athletic activity. Those who could not squeeze themselves into something as an athletic activity would not be covered by the proposed tax measure. On that point, we think it is unfair.

We think the use of the tax system by the general taxpayer to in effect subsidize another individual's personal consumption choices is not necessarily a good idea. I can think of a variety of examples where people make personal consumption choices. If I went hiking on the Bruce Trail or somewhere like that but I did not pay anything to do it, I would not receive any tax benefit. However, if I went hiking and paid a fee to go through a park or something of that nature, that would be a possible deduction. This would create some distortions which would be an inappropriate and inefficient use of the tax system.

I am sure that hon. colleagues would agree that participation in amateur sport is clearly a personal choice.

Finally, the really significant point here is, if we agree that it is inefficient and a poor use of the tax system and it disadvantages certain Canadians while giving an advantage to other Canadians, it would be very costly.

The finance department costs this item out at \$450 million. Let me give the House some perspective on that. Members may recall in the health part of the budget that \$300 million was set aside for a national immunization program. That is a worthy goal, and the hon. gentleman's bill is a worthy goal. However, \$450 million seems to be an extraordinary sum of money.

Those are essentially the four major reasons why the government will not be supporting the hon. gentleman's initiative. Notwithstanding the fact that we all like him a great deal and think he is a wonderful soccer player, we do not think that the bill would be an appropriate use of the tax system. We do think it would be a costly bill. In some respects it would provide an unintended form of discrimination among Canadians.

● (1750)

Mr. Rick Casson (Lethbridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I just want to make a few comments, and I will not take too much time. The purpose of the bill to increase activity among young people or anybody for that matter is well-intended. It is important that we do that.

However, if we are looking at using the tax system to promote amateur sports, why should we not look broad based tax relief for families? The Conservative Party is working on that. If we give tax relief across the board in substantive amounts to all families, then they can make the choice. The member from the government side who just spoke said that some people get involved in music or theatre and some get involved in sports. There are all kinds of activities that people can get into to round out their lives.

To target in on sports and to offer tax relief or tax credits for the amounts spent for enrolling our children is the wrong way to go to achieve what the member wants to achieve. We should do it through tax relief for all families.

In my personal instance, my children both played sports, and that seems like a long time ago. Also my daughter took music lessons. Therefore, where do we have the saw-off? A lot of the sports in which my children were involved were through high school and through the education system. Thank goodness, because when my son got out of hockey, it was getting to be pretty expensive. This is what I think the hon. member is trying to get at. We need to give some help for people to be involved. However, the travelling, the equipment and some of the other things that went along with it were far more expensive than signing up for the year.

If we are to be serious about promoting health and wellness, there are other ways to do it. I remember years ago when the participation program was in place. That was something to which we all paid attention. There were commercials which promoted walking so far every day, or getting involved in other ways, or improving lifestyles through better eating habits or whatever. It was information that went out to Canadians in a regular fashion, and I think a lot of people paid attention to that.

If we are serious about offering families an opportunity to improve their children's activity in sports, let us do it on a broad based tax relief basis. Let us give the money back to the families. We should not take it from them in the first place through the tax system. Then they can make the choices that they want to put their children into whatever activity, whether it is amateur sport, theatre or music. There are so many things to do for our children that if families had a few more bucks to enrol them in some of these other issues, then I think everybody would be better off.

● (1755)

Mr. Brian Masse (Windsor West, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to speak today to the bill. It is important that we talk about it. It is interesting to note that when it comes to tax cuts and relief for corporations and for the most affluent, there is never any hesitation by the government to move forward on those initiatives. There is never any hesitation by the Conservative Party to move forward on those initiatives.

It is interesting to bring up the whole balance that has to be struck between the arts community and the sports community, as if we are trying to divide them. Two months ago the NDP put forward the motion for arts relief taxation. It would have provided an opportunity to allow some tax relief for artists. We received the same type of argument, that we could not do it for one group without doing it for another. That is unfair. Families require some type of tax relief, especially given the burden that has been placed upon the individuals who want to get their children to participate in sports. That is the important notation.

Being a former municipal councillor and also working for the not for profit sector for 10 years of my life, I know that the stretching of the envelope, which has existed over the last decade, has been incredible. We have watched sports associations go to businesses and families looking for support to continue to have children and others involved in sports, or entertainment, or whatever depending upon the association. However, for sports in particular, they have to go back and back to the private sector.

Private Members' Business

My community is one of the most giving. For numerous years, we have won the percentage per capita of donations to the United Way for all of Canada. However, the reality is the people have gone so far and they have done so much that they cannot do any more. This is an instance where the government could participate with that partnership.

I was interested to hear the comments from the government, such as it was inappropriate for the tax system. What is appropriate though is tax cuts. The government can afford \$100 billion in tax cuts but it cannot afford a real pittance for amateur sports. It is unbelievable.

The bill is very progressive and it would create somewhat of a similar circumstance to that of charitable donations. What that would do is empower groups and organizations. They would have the ability to go out and offset some of those costs.

The second point the government noted was that it would cost money. Well it has plenty of money to dole out. The government has taken credit for the initiative to sell Petro-Canada. Its shares are estimated to be worth around \$3 billion, depending upon the stock market. However, what is interesting is in the new year alone the government gave the oil and gas industry an approximate \$2 billion tax cut, so it had to make that up. There is plenty of money for corporate tax cuts but not enough for our citizens or our children.

This is the inclusion aspect that is so important about this bill because there is a connection to the family. We have heard from so many Canadians about the family and their concerns about being involved in a community, having a safe environment and keeping kids active. Amateur sport is one of those investments where we can get kids away from the television screens, off the computers and out on the streets, involved in the community centres and contributing to the success of this nation. Their health will be improved because they will learn good habits about their wellness and about physical activity that will carry them through their lives, and that will be a benefit for our health care system. I believe that is an important recognition.

For example, we can look at hockey tournaments. Speaking as an Ontarian, we have a lot of different hockey tournaments across the province as well as in the United States, and there are goodwill ambassadors. We have so many opportunities to mix among ourselves as families and to connect with other people across the country and the United States, for the sportsmanship and for the actual involvement.

The bill would provide some tax relief so we could encourage that type of activity. I fail to understand the lack of foresight by the government in ensuring the bill does not go forward. It is unbelievable, especially when we have a system that has provided so much relief for other citizens.

We have an opportunity to make a difference for our young people. This is what the bill really goes to. We have an opportunity to do something progressive and to be involved in their involvement in the actual sports theatre. That is very important, and the government is showing regressive attitudes with the fact that it cannot provide a mere pittance for this activity.

● (1800)

I am going to be supporting this private member's bill. I find there is duplicity in what we are hearing from the government. I am not surprised to see the Conservative Party being part of this by not providing tax relief for citizens but having it for corporations.

Mr. Murray Calder (Dufferin—Peel—Wellington—Grey, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this private member's bill proposes a change 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 sport. We need to review this proposal in light of what it is trying to achieve and how it is trying to achieve it.

First, it would appear that the hon. member's proposal has a clear intent: to encourage Canadians to participate in amateur sport. This is a goal that the government shares with the member for Sackville—Musquodoboit Valley—Eastern Shore. We too recognize the importance of amateur sport in this country and the importance of participation in sport and physical fitness activities.

This year, thanks to the 2004 budget injection of \$30 million into the Canadian sport system, we will contribute some \$100 million to Sport Canada. Let me tell the members of the House about some of the great things Sport Canada does. It provides funds to amateur sport organizations to increase sport participation, to support the development of young athletes and to improve access to sport for under-represented groups, including people with disabilities and the aboriginal peoples. 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 that are both national and international in scope.

While we may share the member's objectives, and we do, I must say that 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 fair. 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 activities in their daily lives and to helping them reduce barriers that prevent them from being active. There are many such barriers. Statistics Canada reports several reasons why Canadians do not participate in amateur sport or fitness activities: lack of time, lack of interest and health, and injury or age concerns.

In fact, we have to look way down the list of the barriers to participation before we get to cost. Very few Canadians consider cost a significant barrier to their participation: only about one in fifty inactive Canadians. In fact, this is not surprising given that there are many activities that are part of a healthy lifestyle and cost very little. Swimming, walking and cycling are good examples.

What does this mean? Clearly it means that the hon. member's proposal would do very little to encourage inactive Canadians to become active in amateur sport or to increase their level of physical activity. In other words, this proposal would be ineffective.

Private Members' Business

Even though this proposal would be ineffective, it would come at a very high cost. According to Statistics Canada the average Canadian household spends approximately \$275 on recreational facilities and membership fees each year. Providing a 16% tax credit on these expenditures would cost the federal government almost half a billion dollars in tax revenue. Again, the money would be spent without having a significant impact on the level of physical activities of Canadians.

In fact, almost all of this tax money would end up subsidizing the 8.3 million Canadian adults 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.

Mr. Peter Stoffer: That's nonsense. You don't believe that.

Mr. Murray Calder: Of course I believe it.

The proposal also raises significant fairness concerns. As a general rule, underneath the current tax system, tax deductions or credits are generally provided for one of two things. They either apply to the expenses incurred to earn income, things like employment insurance premiums, union dues, and child care expenses, or they apply to non-discretionary expenses that significantly reduce a taxpayer's ability to pay tax, such as above average medical expenses.

• (1805)

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?

We would be asking those Canadians who choose not to pay such fees to subsidize those Canadians who do so. We would be asking Canadians who choose to take part in physical activities such as jogging or cycling, which do not generally require payment of fees, or those who choose to spend their spare time on other non-sport related hobbies or activities, to subsidize those Canadians who choose to participate in sports that do, such as hockey, downhill skiing or golf.

Let us take the specific example of golf. I have many golf courses in my riding. Golf is now 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.

I want to make this clear. The government considers physical activity and sports to be important to Canadian society and they have a positive effect on individuals and on communities. However, there are other personal activities that also lead to the personal betterment of individuals and to the development of healthy and cohesive communities. In engaging in these personal activities, Canadians also face substantial costs.

Let us examine two examples to review whether it would be fair to Canadian consumers to subsidize amateur sport fees and not these other equally important expenditures.

A typical parent with a young daughter may want to encourage that child to be physically active by registering her in the local hockey league. That parent may also choose to register her daughter for singing lessons because the child enjoys it and appears to be talented. Both decisions would support the development of the child and both decisions would see the parent incur costs.

The member's proposal would differentiate between these two types of costs incurred by the parent for the development of her child. The registration fees for hockey would be subsidized by other taxpayers, but the fees for the singing lessons would not be. Both decisions lead to a positive outcome for the child. Only one would get supported by the tax system.

Let us review another situation. A Canadian adult could register to join and participate in a local soccer league and could also choose to buy a subscription to the local theatre. The individual incurs costs in both cases. Both achievements have a positive spin-off effect for the individual and for his community; both activities support the community. However, under the member's proposal, only one of them would be supported by the tax system.

It is for reasons such as these that the Canadian tax system does not generally recognize specific personal expenses such as fees incurred for participation in amateur sport.

In light of what I have discussed, I hope that hon. members present here agree that this private member's bill does not fulfill the criteria of effectiveness and fairness. I would ask that all members think very carefully about voting for the bill.

• (1810)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Caroline St-Hilaire (Longueuil, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I very pleased to speak to Bill C-210. Furthermore, I would like to acknowledge the initiative taken by my colleague for Sackville—Musquodoboit Valley—Eastern Shore.

Straight off, I will tell you that the objective pursued by this bill is absolutely commendable. As the Bloc Québécois critic for amateur sport, I have always been 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.

Private Members' Business

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. 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. Under certain circumstances, it can be effective. 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 into the pockets of families. Ultimately, this may cost more in expenses than in direct benefits for the taxpayer.

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? Why not other areas, such as cultural activities? What is being done for musicians, considering the exorbitant cost of some musical instruments? What about people engaged in other interests that are equally worthwhile as far as their health and well-being is concerned?

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. 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? If I want to play golf, I need equipment and a club membership. So, as hon. members can see, this is opening the door to huge abuses.

Of course such is not my colleague's intention, but the lack of clarification is, I think, risky.

As well, 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. This has not been done.

For all these reasons, therefore, the Bloc Québécois cannot be in favour of this bill in its present form. I believe that the objective sought will not, unfortunately, be achieved.

However, the federal government has the key to allowing everyone to breathe easier and to improve their quality of life, whether through sport, art or any other endeavour.

• (1815)

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, quite the contrary; 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.

Once again, I want to express my disappointment in this government, which has done nothing, included nothing for amateur athletes in this budget. It missed an excellent opportunity to show its leadership and its interest in amateur and elite athletes.

This government certainly has the means to do this. As for the families, the athletes and all the organizations that are working toward that end, they are greatly in need of that money. What is the federal government waiting for? It must act. It is swimming in millions of dollars in surplus funds. We are expecting the government to act rapidly to help older and younger athletes, both at the amateur and elite levels.

[English]

Mr. Peter Stoffer (Sackville—Musquodoboit Valley—Eastern Shore, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I have to bite my tongue sometimes when I am in this House, but I first want to thank you for the opportunity to be able to speak to what I consider a very important bill.

As upset as I am with the Conservatives and not so much the Bloc, I understand where they are coming from, but it is the government. I am not asking to be given a tax break if I walk up a flight of stairs instead of taking the elevator. What utter nonsense.

It was this government that said no to an arts and culture tax rebate that was brought in by the critic for the federal NDP from Dartmouth. She brought that to the House and the Liberals said we cannot do that, so they cancelled it.

It is unbelievable that the Conservative Party talks about being the party of grassroots, for families, and for individuals, and yet they will not even contemplate a tax break for sports and physical activity. It is utter nonsense.

Private Members' Business

I cannot believe the government members standing up in the House saying how terrible it would be to give a family a tax break that signs up a kid in hockey. However, government members do not say that if I was a multilateral corporation and had box seats at the Montreal stadium that I could write that off as a business expense. They never mention that.

When it comes to a family making \$35,000, or whatever the average is for low income people, trying to get them a tax break so they can enroll their children into sports or physical activity, the Liberals say no. I say shame to these people, absolute shame.

They can give \$100 billion in tax cuts to the large corporate friends, many of them friends of the Prime Minister, but they cannot give a tax break to Mr. and Mrs. Smith of main street Canada.

If government members are really angst against helping families and individuals become more physically fit and having them in better shape, why is it they always talk to the back end? They are spending billions and billions of dollars on health care with absolutely no question as to why the people are sick in the first place.

Why do we have rampant asthma in our children and rampant diabetes among aboriginal people? We have the most obese children in the western world and the government fails to address those issues. This is one little aspect of addressing the issue of keeping people physically fit and active, and helping their families get a bit of a tax break.

For example, it costs \$100 to sign up a kid in my soccer league in Fall River, Nova Scotia. This bill would propose that we would get \$34 back, similar to a charitable donation. With that \$34 families could go out and buy a pair of shoes for that child. That helps those families. We are not asking for a \$20,000 golf membership to be written off. If the government has a problem with that, then help us amend the bill and make it more palatable.

This bill did not come from my mind sitting in the opposition lobby. Individual members and families came to me and asked for some sort of relief on the fees that they pay for physical activity in sports. I guarantee that if every member of the House went back to their constituency during the Easter break and asked their constituents if they would like to see a tax deduction on the fees that they pay for physical activity or amateur sports, that the answer would be yes.

Mr. Speaker, you are one of the greatest sports fans of this country. If you were able to speak, you would speak glowingly of this bill. I am absolutely appalled at the fact that the government and the Conservatives show hypocrisy over and over again by not supporting this bill.

They voted against the arts and culture tax deductions. They are going to vote against this bill for sports fees, yet they have no problem voting for major billion dollar tax cuts for their friends. They have never mentioned that the box seat is tax deductible for businesses. However, the family who goes to the rink in Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan, at 5 o'clock in the morning with their kid and pays \$400 or \$500 fees cannot get a tax deduction.

● (1820)

It is clear that the next election will be based on who stands up for today's families and that will be the federal New Democratic Party. Who stands up for the multinational corporations and their friends? That will be the Liberal Party and the Conservative Party. We will let Canadians know loud and clear throughout this land where the government stands. It is unbelievable.

We present this bill on behalf of Canadians. It has the wide support of sporting organizations throughout the country. Mr. George Chuvalo, who is a former Canadian heavyweight champion, is someone who knows about tragedy in life. He lost three children and his wife to drugs and suicide. He came to my riding to support this bill. During the press conference, George Chuvalo said that healthy bodies and healthy minds make healthy choices. He fully supports this bill.

The individuals on the government side mock and demean the intent of this bill. It would give families a bit of a tax break. It would get more people physically active. It would make us a healthier nation. If we were a healthier nation, there would be less costs in health care. If we were a healthier nation, there would be less social costs and less criminal costs in our justice system.

Time and time again we ask the people at the Big Brothers Big Sisters of Canada and the Boys and Girls Club what the best way is to get children off the streets and to be productive members of society. They say it is through amateur sports and physical activity.

I heard members opposite say that this would divide people. What happens to people on welfare or no income? What kind of a break do they get?

I remind members that during the 1976 Olympics we had the lottery ticket. It was designed to do one thing. The revenues from lottery ticket sales were to go to sports, culture and recreation. In the mid-1980s the federal government and provinces got together and the provinces took over control of the lottery funds.

A new democrat example is the Province of Saskatchewan, where over 44% of the revenues from lottery funds go into sports, culture and recreation. In Nova Scotia, a province under a Conservative government, less than 2% of those funds go into sports, culture and recreation.

If it wants to help the low and no income people, I suggest that the federal government work with its provincial counterparts and ensure that those lottery funds assist the people who do not have an income, so they can participate in sports and everything else.

This bill was designed by taxpayers for taxpayers. If the government wants to avert the burgeoning costs of health care and if it wants to stop the emerging cost of crime on our streets—because we are not going to eradicate it or stop it—this would go a long way in assisting those families and helping our youth. I know very well that in the House of Commons a good 80% of us are out of shape and overweight. What kind of example are we showing our children?

Adjournment Debate

By giving those families the opportunity of a tax incentive, it may encourage them to be physically active themselves, to join a gym, to join a dance club, or to get their kids active. They would know that they could get a little bit of a break. Healthy bodies make healthy minds, healthy choices and healthy communities, and most of all, make a healthy Canada.

• (1825)

[Translation]

The Deputy Speaker: The time provided for the consideration of private members' business has now expired and the order is dropped to the bottom of the order of precedence on the Order Paper.

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 deemed to have been moved.

[English]

NATIONAL DEFENCE

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise in this adjournment debate as a consequence of the question I asked the Minister of National Defence regarding the theft of \$160 million of taxpayer money from the Department of National Defence.

Canadians are concerned that, as in the case of the sponsorship scandal, when the investigation into the theft of the \$160 million of taxpayer funds is completed, not one dollar will be returned to the people of Canada.

The investigation into this theft must be open and transparent.

If the government, and by extension the minister, is serious about the democratic deficit, the Minister of National Defence will recognize that Canadians are looking for a public investigation with a public disclosure of the facts.

The other issue surrounding the theft of this large sum of money is the fact that it is not available for other Department of National Defence expenditures.

As the member of Parliament for Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, which includes Base Petawawa, I shared in the soldiers' disappointment that the federal budget contained no additional money for the military.

The announcement of a tax exemption for soldiers serving in high risk overseas missions should have been a good news announcement. Instead, it has created bitter resentment toward the federal government among all the returning troops, particularly from Base Petawawa.

The following is a letter I received from a soldier, which I understand sums up the feeling among the majority of the returning military personnel. It reads, "Dear [Member of Parliament]: I'm sure that you're aware of the Federal Government's 2004 budget initiative regarding military personnel now being exempt from paying taxes, while serving on high risk overseas missions.

"This initiative is a welcome one that recognizes the stress service members and their families endure throughout an overseas deployment.

"However, as the tax break is effective only from 1 January 2004, the implementation of the tax initiative lacks fairness, particularly with regard to service members who served on ROTO 0 of Operation ATHENA, in Afghanistan between July 2003 and February 2004.

"We soldiers who served on ROTO 0 established the Canadian mission in Afghanistan.

"We stabilized the Canadian area of operations, and handed the area over in good order to the Valcartier-based soldiers of ROTO 1.

"However, unlike our ROTO 1 counterparts, we will not be enjoying the tax break for the bulk of our overseas service, as a result of the 1 January cut-off date.

"While setting up and establishing this mission, the soldiers who served on ROTO 0 faced the constant threat of, and experienced, rocket attacks, mine strikes and suicide bombings.

These casualties were caused from planned, hostile acts initiated by the enemy and were the first casualties of this nature to have occurred to Canadians since the war in Korea.

Numerous other members of ROTO 0 witnessed the carnage in both of the above mentioned incidents and they carry emotional scars. As for myself, I think about those three soldiers who died for Canada every day, Corporal Beerenfenger, Sergeant Short and Corporal Murphy, and I will continue to do so every day for the rest of my life.

• (1830)

Hon. David Price (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, Lib.): First, Mr. Speaker, I believe the original question was on Hewlett-Packard. I just wanted the member opposite to know that in April 2003, in a routine audit of contractor records, we identified irregularities at that point in the management of the Hewlett-Packard contracts. The contract was to provide hardware maintenance for computer equipment to DND on an "as and when requested" basis.

We found those irregularities, saying, "Okay, there is a problem there"; we must remember that we are talking about internal identification. In addition, in September 2003 we initiated a thorough forensic audit, engaging the assistance of PricewaterhouseCoopers Canada, an outside firm. To be thorough, we decided to look back 10 years just to see what was going on or to find what could have been problems in those 10 years previous to this. A civilian employee of DND with oversight of the contract was subsequently dismissed and the matter was referred to the RCMP. That is ongoing.

The Offices of the Auditor General and the Comptroller General have been kept apprised of the ongoing audits. In fact, the Auditor General has indicated that management and the internal audit group are handling the issue in a way that seems extremely appropriate.

Hewlett-Packard has a contractual agreement with the Government of Canada and we do not believe that it fulfilled the terms of this agreement. The government contracted Hewlett-Packard to provide specific information management and information technology services.

The government has also demanded that Hewlett-Packard remit to the Department of National Defence the amount of \$159 million or provide evidence to substantiate the delivery of goods and services in respect of these amounts.

The department has at this point withheld payments of approximately \$50 million that were pending to Hewlett-Packard until the final outcome of the audits.

The government would have been irresponsible not to take these actions, but additional steps have also been taken.

As part of the department's ongoing comptrollership plan, financial controls have been strengthened. The Crown is continuing to investigate the amount of money that may have been wrongfully paid out under the contracts. Also, an interdepartmental team of officials is meeting regularly to direct future actions. The file has been referred to the RCMP, which is conducting a criminal investigation, as well as the Department of Justice civil litigation branch. The government reserves the right to claim from HP any further amounts determined to have been wrongfully invoiced under the HP contracts with Public Works and Government Services Canada for DND.

The government is taking active and decisive steps to ensure that this matter is resolved satisfactorily.

• (1835)

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant: Mr. Speaker, the letter from the soldier on ROTO 0 continues:

“Despite the public's popular sentiment and belief regarding Canada's role as peacekeepers, in Afghanistan Canadian soldiers are employed as participants in the terrorist war.

Adjournment Debate

“My company, Parachute Company, 3rd Battalion, the Royal Canadian Regiment, suffered greatly.

“Among the company's 121 soldiers, three soldiers were killed in action, and six others were wounded during minestrike and suicide bombing incidents.

“In light of ROTO 0's experiences and stellar service to Canada, it does not seem fair that ROTO 0 will not benefit from the tax break in the same manner as will ROTO 1.

“On behalf of your military constituents, could you approach both the Minister of Finance and the Minister of National Defence and perhaps Parliament to resolve this issue?”

I thank the soldier. On behalf of the soldiers and their dependants and in the sense of fairness that I hope we all share in this place, I ask that the Minister of Finance correct this oversight in the federal budget and recognize that all soldiers on overseas missions are in danger.

Surely if it takes four years for the Department of National Defence to realize that it has lost \$160 million, the government can treat all soldiers equally.

Hon. David Price: Mr. Speaker, we will go back to the original question, which was on Hewlett-Packard. Again I will say that we found the problem ourselves with an internal audit. Action has been taken. There has been somebody fired. The RCMP is in the investigation. We are taking steps to get back any money for which work was not actually performed. Therefore, I think we are doing all that we can at this moment. We will continue to look a lot more closely in the future to make sure we do not get into this type of situation.

[*Translation*]

The Deputy Speaker: The motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24 (1).

(The House adjourned at 6:37 p.m.)

CONTENTS

Wednesday, March 31, 2004

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

David Strangway	
Mr. Adams	1905
Volunteer Emergency Workers	
Mr. Toews	1905
Insurance Industry	
Mr. Malhi	1905
Arts and Culture	
Ms. Bulte	1905
User Fees Act	
Mr. Fontana	1906
Gertrude Crosbie	
Mr. Doyle	1906
Wilbert Keon	
Mr. Bellemare	1906
Diane Descôteaux	
Ms. Picard	1906
New Horizons Program	
Mr. Marcil	1906
Salvation Army International Staff Band	
Mr. Goldring	1907
Kyoto Protocol	
Mrs. Redman	1907
Violence Against Women	
Ms. McDonough	1907
Employment Insurance	
Mr. Asselin	1907
House of Commons	
Mr. Lincoln	1907
Government Appointments	
Mr. Moore	1908

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

The Prime Minister	
Mr. Harper	1908
Mr. Martin (LaSalle—Émard)	1908
Mr. Harper	1908
Mr. Martin (LaSalle—Émard)	1908
Mr. Harper	1908
Mr. Martin (LaSalle—Émard)	1909
Mr. MacKay	1909
Mr. Martin (LaSalle—Émard)	1909
Mr. MacKay	1909
Mr. Martin (LaSalle—Émard)	1909
Sponsorship Program	
Mr. Duceppe	1909
Mr. Martin (LaSalle—Émard)	1909

Mr. Duceppe	1910
Mr. Saada	1910
Mr. Gauthier	1910
Mr. Saada	1910
Mr. Gauthier	1910
Mr. Saada	1910

National Defence

Ms. Davies	1910
Mr. Martin (LaSalle—Émard)	1910
Ms. Davies	1910
Mr. Owen (Vancouver Quadra)	1911

Sponsorship Program

Mrs. Ablonczy	1911
Mr. Owen (Vancouver Quadra)	1911
Mrs. Ablonczy	1911
Mr. Owen (Vancouver Quadra)	1911
Mr. Kenney	1911
Mr. Owen (Vancouver Quadra)	1911
Mr. Kenney	1911
Mr. Owen (Vancouver Quadra)	1911

Health

Mr. Ménard	1912
Mr. Pettigrew	1912
Mr. Ménard	1912
Mr. Pettigrew	1912

The Budget

Mr. Paquette	1912
Mr. Goodale	1912
Mr. Paquette	1912
Mr. Goodale	1912

Government Expenditures

Mr. Solberg	1912
Mr. Martin (LaSalle—Émard)	1912
Mr. Solberg	1913
Mr. Martin (LaSalle—Émard)	1913

The Budget

Mr. Moore	1913
Mr. Goodale	1913
Mr. Moore	1913
Mr. Goodale	1913

Foreign Affairs

Mr. O'Brien (London—Fanshawe)	1913
Mr. McTeague	1913

Canada Elections Act

Mr. Nystrom	1913
Mr. Cotler	1914

Employment Insurance

Mr. Godin	1914
Mr. Volpe	1914

Supreme Court of Canada	
Mr. Toews	1914
Mr. Cotler	1914
Mr. Toews	1914

National Security	
Mr. Sorenson	1914
Ms. McLellan	1914
Mr. Sorenson	1914
Ms. McLellan	1914

Employment Insurance	
Mr. Guimond	1915
Mr. Volpe	1915
Mr. Guimond	1915
Mr. Volpe	1915

Agriculture	
Mr. Ritz	1915
Mr. Speller	1915
Mr. Ritz	1915
Mr. Speller	1915

Presence in Gallery	
The Speaker	1915

Message from the Senate	
The Speaker	1915

THE ROYAL ASSENT

The Speaker	1916
-------------------	------

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

The Budget	
Financial Statement of Minister of Finance	
Budget motion	1916
Motion agreed to	1917

Ways and Means	
Motion No. 7	
Mr. Goodale	1917
Motion for concurrence	1917
Motion No. 7 agreed to	1918
Motion No. 8	
Mr. Mitchell	1918
Motion for concurrence	1918
Motion No. 8 agreed to	1919

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Employment Insurance Program	
Motion No. 475	1919
Motion defeated	1920

THE ROYAL ASSENT

The Speaker	1920
-------------------	------

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Older Adult Justice Act	
Bill C-439. Second reading	1921

(Bill read the second time and referred to a committee) .	1922
---	------

Chief Electoral Officer's Report	
The Speaker	1922

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

Sponsorship Program	
Mr. Owen (Vancouver Quadra)	1922

Government On-Line	
Mr. Owen (Vancouver Quadra)	1922

Government Response to Petitions	
Mr. Gallaway	1922

Public Service Commission	
Mr. Gallaway	1922

Budget Implementation Act, 2004	
Mr. Goodale	1922
Bill C-30. Introduction and first reading	1922
(Motions deemed adopted, bill read the first time and printed)	1922

Tlcho Land Claims and Self-Government Act	
Mr. Mitchell	1922
Bill C-31. Introduction and first reading	1922
(Motions deemed adopted, bill read the first time and printed)	1923

National Security	
Ms. McLellan	1923
Mr. Sorenson	1923
Ms. Picard	1924
Mr. Nystrom	1924

National Security	
Mr. Bélanger	1925

Committees of the House	
Foreign Affairs and International Trade	
Mr. Patry	1925
Finance	
Mr. Cullen	1925
Aboriginal Affairs, Northern Development and Natural Resources	
Mr. Laliberte	1925
Procedure and House Affairs	
Mrs. Longfield	1925
Fisheries and Oceans	
Mr. Wappel	1925

Housing Bill of Rights	
Ms. Davies	1925
Bill C-509. Introduction and first reading	1925
(Motions deemed adopted, bill read the first time and printed)	1925

Public Service Employment Act	
Mr. Casey	1925
Bill C-510. Introduction and first reading	1925
(Motions deemed adopted, bill read the first time and printed)	1926

Committees of the House**Procedure and House Affairs**

Mrs. Longfield	1926
Motion for concurrence	1926
(Motion agreed to)	1926

Petitions**Television Violence**

Ms. Allard	1926
------------------	------

Marriage

Mrs. Wayne	1926
Ms. Meredith	1926

Property Rights

Mrs. Gallant	1926
--------------------	------

Marriage

Mrs. Gallant	1926
--------------------	------

Foreign Affairs

Mr. McNally	1926
-------------------	------

Persons with Disabilities

Mr. Doyle	1926
-----------------	------

Housing

Ms. Davies	1927
------------------	------

Divorce Act

Ms. Bourgeois	1927
---------------------	------

Marriage

Mr. Mills (Red Deer)	1927
----------------------------	------

Persons with Disabilities

Mr. Barnes (Gander—Grand Falls)	1927
---------------------------------------	------

Marriage

Mr. Cummins	1927
-------------------	------

Canada Post

Mr. Casey	1927
-----------------	------

Labelling of Alcoholic Beverages

Ms. Wasylcyia-Leis	1927
--------------------------	------

Immigration

Ms. Wasylcyia-Leis	1927
--------------------------	------

Bill C-333

Mr. Mark	1927
----------------	------

Beef Industry

Mr. Mark	1927
----------------	------

Marriage

Mr. Elley	1927
-----------------	------

Health

Ms. McDonough	1928
---------------------	------

Foreign Affairs

Ms. McDonough	1928
---------------------	------

Labelling of Alcoholic Beverages

Mr. Martin (Winnipeg Centre)	1928
------------------------------------	------

Immigration

Mr. Martin (Winnipeg Centre)	1928
------------------------------------	------

Questions on the Order Paper

Mr. Gallaway	1928
Mr. Cummins	1928
Mr. Hearn	1928

Motions for Papers

Mr. Gallaway	1928
--------------------	------

GOVERNMENT ORDERS**Canada Elections Act**

Bill C-3. Third reading	1929
Ms. Meredith	1929
(Motion agreed to, bill read the third time and passed) ..	1929

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS**Income Tax Act**

Mr. Stoffer	1930
Bill C-210. Second reading	1930
Mr. Martin (Winnipeg Centre)	1930
Mr. McKay	1932
Mr. Casson	1933
Mr. Masse	1933
Mr. Calder	1934
Ms. St-Hilaire	1935
Mr. Stoffer	1936

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS**National Defence**

Mrs. Gallant	1938
Mr. Price	1938

MAIL  POSTE

Canada Post Corporation / Société canadienne des postes

Postage paid

Port payé

Lettermail

Poste-lettre

**1782711
Ottawa**

If undelivered, return COVER ONLY to:

Communication Canada - Publishing
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0S9

En cas de non-livraison,

retourner cette COUVERTURE SEULEMENT à :

Communication Canada - Édition
Ottawa (Ontario) K1A 0S9

Published under the authority of the Speaker of the House of Commons

Publié en conformité de l'autorité du Président de la Chambre des communes

Also available on the Parliamentary Internet Parlementaire at the following address:

Aussi disponible sur le réseau électronique « Parliamentary Internet Parlementaire » à l'adresse suivante :

<http://www.parl.gc.ca>

The Speaker of the House hereby grants permission to reproduce this document, in whole or in part, for use in schools and for other purposes such as private study, research, criticism, review or newspaper summary. Any commercial or other use or reproduction of this publication requires the express prior written authorization of the Speaker of the House of Commons.

Additional copies may be obtained from Communication Canada - Canadian Government Publishing, Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0S9

Le Président de la Chambre des communes accorde, par la présente, l'autorisation de reproduire la totalité ou une partie de ce document à des fins éducatives et à des fins d'étude privée, de recherche, de critique, de compte rendu ou en vue d'en préparer un résumé de journal. Toute reproduction de ce document à des fins commerciales ou autres nécessite l'obtention au préalable d'une autorisation écrite du Président.

On peut obtenir des copies supplémentaires en écrivant à : Communication Canada - Édition, Ottawa (Ontario) K1A 0S9

**On peut obtenir la version française de cette publication en écrivant à : Communication Canada - Édition
Ottawa (Ontario) K1A 0S9**